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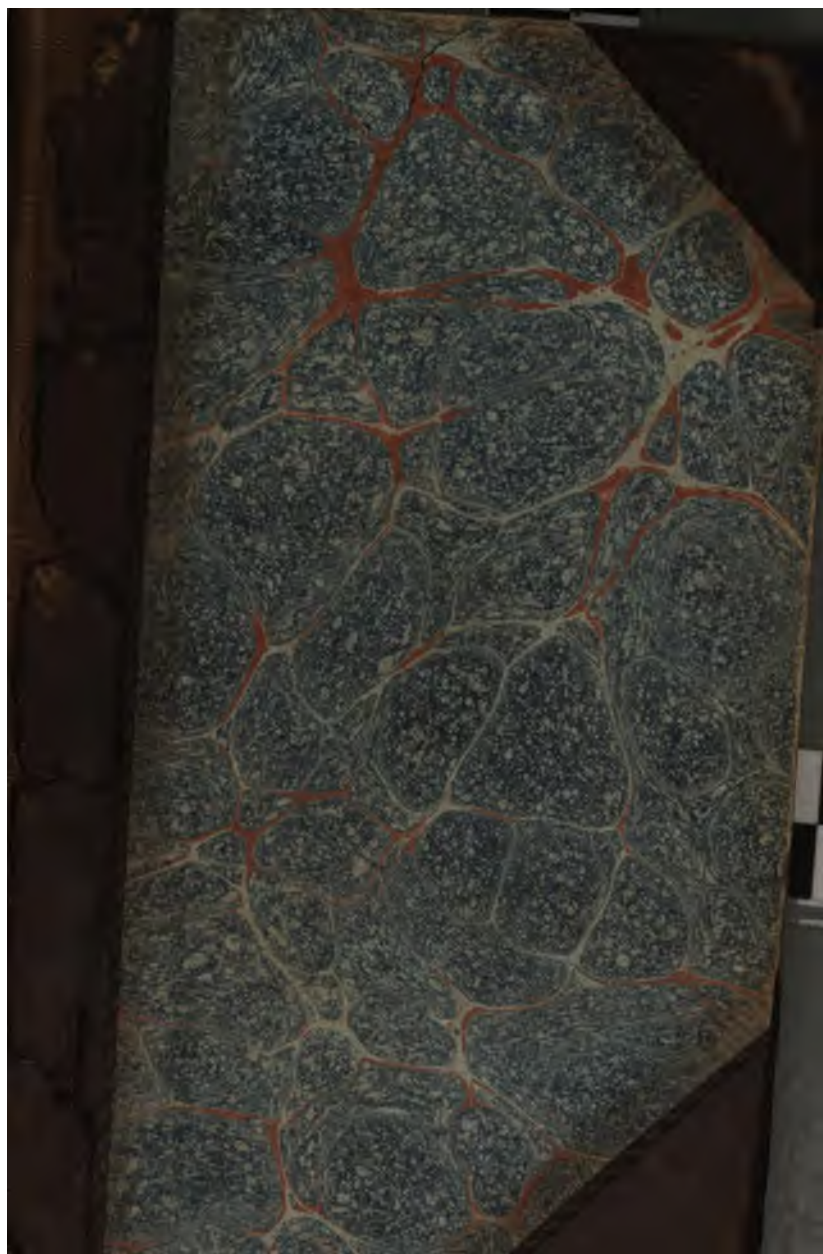
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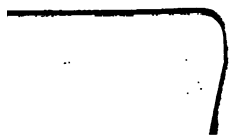
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MARY AND FLORENCE

AT SIXTEEN.



A Continuation of Frabe and Fay.

BY

ANN FRASER TYTLER.

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formation, they retained, in a great measure, the simplicity of their earlier years, and their manners were perfectly natural and unaffected. But at sixteen the lives of Mary and Florence seemed to give promise of a somewhat chequered scene ; in the years which had passed away, Mr. Percy had enjoyed many blessings and had experienced also some privations ; he had been made happy by the birth of a little boy, who, now just entering his fourth year, was the pet and plaything of the whole house, and he had, within a few months previous to the present period, been deprived, by the sudden failure of a mercantile house, of a considerable part of that fortune which would have made this child independent ; but Mr. Percy was one of those who would have esteemed mere pecuniary independence for his son but a doubtful blessing ; and in giving him a liberal education, and habits of regular active industry, he felt he should still bequeath to him the richest inheritance he could ever have bestowed. With some necessary retrenchments and a strict regard to economy, enough, he

hoped, still remained for this, and every essential comfort; but in the extreme delicacy of Mrs. Percy's health he felt a far greater source of anxiety; without any formed complaint, and with the assurance of his medical attendants that there was nothing essentially wrong, there was yet such a look of languor as gave Mr. Percy many an anxious hour; and it had been determined, chiefly on account of Mrs. Percy's health, but also for the sake of the necessary retrenchments, that the Priory should be let for some time, and that the family should spend the ensuing winter in the south of France, and the summer in Switzerland. The girls were present when this arrangement was made; they were now fitted both by nature and by cultivation to be the friends and companions of their parents, and the decision was listened to by them with feelings strongly characteristic of their different dispositions. Mary's quiet, steady judgment fully approved of the measure, but still she acutely felt that she was about to leave the happy home of her childhood, that the flowers she had planted would be gathered

by other hands, the birds she had reared be dependent on the care of strangers, and above all, that many an humble heart around would be well nigh broken by such a parting. Florence, quite as affectionate and with feelings fully as acute, was still apt to be carried away by the impulse of the moment: she only saw before her the flowery fields of Provence, and already was bounding in imagination over plains of the almond tree, the fig, and the olive.

“O Mary!” she exclaimed, the moment they were alone, “is it not delightful? think, only think of our witnessing the setting suns of Languedoc! think of our gazing upon Mont Blanc, and rambling amidst the Pyrenees.”

“Yes,” answered her sister, (catching part of Florence’s enthusiasm, and her colour deepening as she spoke,)—“yes, Florence, it will be indeed delightful, we shall visit the land of the Troubadours, the land of the minstrel and the song; and,” she continued, and the bright beam left her sweet countenance, “we take with us those that are

most dear, but still we leave much behind; and you especially, Florence; think how poor old Thomas and the gipsies will feel your absence, and how will you ever be able to part with——?”

“With Mr. Maitland,” hastily interrupted Florence, the blood mounting to her forehead; “how could I be so base as to forget him even for a moment, my second father? Oh! to part with Mr. Maitland will indeed be misery to me.” Her eyes filled with tears, she hastily covered her face with her hands, and leant her head upon the table. But to explain why Florence wept, and who was the cause of those tears, it will be necessary for me to go back two years in my history.

There was a beautiful spot of rising ground at the extremity of the shrubbery, where an opening had been made to admit a view of the surrounding country, and where, under the shade of two magnificent acacia trees, the sisters had often found a shelter from the heat of the noon-day sun; here had Florence, with old Thomas’s assistance, erected a little bower as a surprise to Mary on her fourteenth

birth-day; and in Mary's bower, with their books and their work, had been spent many a happy hour: here would Florence sometimes steal away of an evening to enjoy all alone the dear delight of reciting aloud her favourite passages from "Marmion," or the "Lady of the Lake;" here with glowing cheek and beaming eyes would she fondly dwell on the description of Ellen, and would exclaim—

"What though no rule of courtly grace,
To measured mood had trained her pace,—
A foot more light, a step more true,
Ne'er from the heath-flower dashed the dew;
E'en the slight hare-bell raised its head,
Elastic from her airy tread:
What though upon her speech there hung
The accents of the mountain tongue,
Those silver sounds, so soft, so dear,
The list'ner held his breath to hear."

Florence's early love of poetry had been implanted in her, not only by nature, but by a master's hand. The only time the sisters had ever left their home was to accompany their parents on a tour through Scotland; and one happy week, a week never to be

forgotten, had been spent at Abbotsford : there had they been delighted with that sweet and playful wit which sparkled alike for old and young ; there they had listened to the minstrel's lay and to the feats of Robin Hood under the green-wood tree ; and had returned to their home with imaginations so glowing and with such a host of poetic images in their young heads, as had cost Mrs. Percy no small effort to restrain within proper bounds.

It was after a day of sultry heat that Florence one evening sought the shelter of her favourite bower ; the air was still close and enervating, just such an hour as Florence felt should be devoted to the re-perusal of Thomson's "Castle of Indolence" for the hundredth time, and soon she might have been heard exclaiming—

" I care not, fortune, what you me deny :
You cannot rob me of free nature's grace ;
You cannot shut the windows of the sky,
Through which Aurora shows her bright'ning face."

Dear Florence, it was little she had then

experienced of fickle fortune ; it is true, in former days she had at one time lost her only shilling, which had escaped from a hole in her pocket, and she had felt acutely at the time both being obliged to return from Worcester without her promised purchase, and also that Mary had that very morning gently hinted the propriety of the pocket being put aside till properly mended ; but years had rolled on, and Time, with healing on his wings, had cast a soft shadow over her young sorrow, yet the loss of thousands could not at that moment have given more touching pathos to her voice and manner. Again she read on with deep attention, till suddenly she was roused by a burst of song from a bird which seemed close beside her : she looked up, her work-basket stood on a little table before her, and in it lay a full-blown rose, and a ripe peach, which she had gathered as she passed along. Perched upon the edge of the basket was a little bird : it appeared to her to be a canary, although it had the song of the nightingale ; yet it was no wild songstress of the grove, but evidently some cherished favourite,

and of particularly social habits, for it was nowise intimidated by Florence's presence,—it pecked at the peach, seemed to admire the rose, perched first upon her hand, and then fluttered on her breast, from whence it poured forth such a volume of sweet sounds as perfectly enchanted Florence. "O you darling!" she exclaimed, "you little treasure!" and gently placing it within the basket, she put her pocket-handkerchief over it, and flew towards the house.

Greatly was the little stranger admired by every one, and it seemed quite to have the wish to ingratiate itself with its new acquaintances, for after pouring forth all its wood-notes wild, it suddenly, to the astonishment of the party, broke away into the two first bars of

" O for him back again,
O to see him back again !"

"You dear delightful little Jacobite thing you," exclaimed Florence; and she almost stifled it with her caresses.

"Gently, gently, Florence," interposed her

sister, "you will destroy the little bird. What a very dear little creature it is !" she continued, "and O, how they must grieve that have lost it !"

"Now, Mary," Florence answered, reddening extremely, "I take it particularly unkind in you to say so; I do not believe the bird is one bit regretted; they must have been careless, indifferent people, or they would have taken better care of it; but the poor little thing shall never want a friend while it is with me."

Mary was silenced, and to oblige her sister, tried hard to believe that the little Jacobite's former friends must have been the most unfeeling and good-for-nothing family in the world.

There was soon but one dissenting opinion in the house with regard to the little stranger. Frisk, respectable in years, and with all the proud consciousness of long-trying fidelity, had no idea of a new favourite making its appearance to engross attention: he showed strong marks of decided disapprobation; snarled, growled, and finally, one day almost

worried the poor little intruder : it required all Florence's influence over him, and the greatest exertion of Frisk's reasoning powers, to restore peace between them.

CHAPTER II.

THE bird became every day more and more precious to Florence, and little did she dream how soon she was to be called upon to resign her favourite, or what far greater blessing was to be bestowed upon her in exchange. It had been in her possession but one short week, when, after a day of alternate showers and sunshine, Florence sat reading in the bower, her bird flitting about gaily amidst the honeysuckles and shadowing roses which surrounded her, confined only by a few yards of blue ribbon which she had fastened to its little leg, as a gentle restraint on its wandering propensities. The sun had gone down behind the hill, evening with its silent dews was stealing on, and the hum from the voices

of the village children was every moment becoming more and more faint, while Florence sat engrossed in the volume before her, and all unconscious of the lateness of the hour : but as the darkened shadows fell upon the page, she suddenly threw aside her book, and holding out her hand, a signal her little bird instantly obeyed, she exclaimed, " And now, my little treasure, for your evening song ; I have been neglecting you too long : come now, sing to me

O for him back again,
O to see him back again !

What mute, my little fellow, not a sound !
Are you sleepy, love ? Must Florence then
sing to you ? And sweetly did she warble,

O for him back again,
O to see him back again ;
I'd gie all my lowland kine
For highland Charlie back again."

A slight rustling in the laurel fence which separated the grounds of the Priory from those of the neighbouring villa arrested her attention : she paused : " No," she said, " it is but

the breeze sweeping down from the hill; but it shall not ruffle your feathers, my little beauty, you shall find shelter here." She placed the bird upon her breast, it fluttered its little wings, and immediately commenced the two first bars of its accustomed song.

"I knew it, I knew it!" exclaimed a man's voice, which seemed to come from behind the arbour. "I felt assured it must be Cheri."

"Hush, John, hush, you may be mistaken."

"No mistake at all, Sir, I knew it from the first."

"Young lady," continued the speaker, "might I intreat you to walk a little farther down the shrubbery to where the fence is low, and let me have one look at the bird which has just been singing?"

Florence rose with a beating heart, and advanced towards the spot where she had been directed. On the other side of the fence stood an elderly gentleman leaning on his servant—his eyes were cast upon the ground, and his countenance was pale; but

though there was much mild benevolence in his expression, an air of inanimate stillness was diffused over his whole person, which made Florence almost tremble, she knew not why.

“Young lady,” he said, and at the sound of his voice the bird flew from her hand, and nestled in the stranger’s breast—it evidently had found its proper home.—“My little wanderer,” he exclaimed, my pretty Cheri, how have I grieved for you !—Young lady,” he continued, in a voice which was singularly low and sweet, “you will wonder at my affection for a bird, but I am a solitary being, and have now few to love—yet I were ungrateful to a gracious God, did I not thankfully acknowledge the many blessings by which I am still surrounded. Still can I rejoice in the warm beams of the morning sun, though my eyes can no longer look upon the brightness of his rising ; still is the breath of flowers sweet to me, though the fair face of nature is hidden from my sight. Within the last few years, I have become *almost*—I may say entirely—blind : but, young lady,” he con-

tinued, "Cheri has found a kind mistress, and a far gayer home; allow me to restore the little truant to you again."

"O no, no," exclaimed Florence, her voice trembling with emotion, "I would not for worlds deprive you of your bird; believe me, Sir," (and who that heard could have for a moment doubted her sincerity?)—"believe me, this bird has never given me, much as I have prized it, half the pleasure it does at this moment, in my being able to restore it to you again." She laid her small white hand on his. He held it for a moment. "Miss Percy — I presume I address Miss Percy."

"Florence Percy," she answered, in a low tone. "My sister Mary is Miss Percy."

"Miss Florence then will, perhaps, admit of a visit from Cheri sometimes, and if ——" he hesitated—"and if I thought Cheri's master would not be deemed an intruder, I should gladly make Mr. Percy's acquaintance, and take the liberty of calling at the Priory."

Florence assured him again and again, that he would be considered a welcome visitor,

and they parted, mutually pleased with each other. Who can wonder that she could talk of nothing that evening but her interesting adventure, as she called it—could think of no one but Mr. Maitland, for so, from his servant having addressed him, she had learned that the stranger was called.

“And so,” said Mr. Percy, who had been for some time a silent listener to her enthusiastic description, “and so, after all, Florence, Cheri’s master does not turn out to be the careless indifferent character we had believed him—not the sort of cruel gentleman who flings from him poor little loyal, Jacobite birds, and deems their absence a positive relief.”

“Now, indeed, indeed, papa,” she answered, smiling, “I have not said too much—wait only till you have seen Mr. Maitland, and you *must* think him delightful.”

“I am quite sure of it, Florence. I already feel that he will only require to make his bow to convince me that he is the most perfect of human beings. Mary, your gentle nature will be fully gratified, for it is now your duty

to consider Mr. Maitland as the most kind and benevolent of men—probably the president of the Humane Society himself.”

Florence looked distressed.

“ Well, Florence,” her papa continued, taking her hand, “ I beg your pardon, and as some small atonement, I will just mention, that had I not been so long detained at Worcester, I had intended this forenoon to have called on Mr. Maitland—yes, you may look surprised on your very Mr. Maitland, Florence. My love,” he said, turning to Mrs. Percy, “ I have heard a good deal of this new neighbour of ours ; I find he has been visiting amongst the poor, and shown much judicious kindness. I stepped in yesterday, when passing through the village, to inquire for poor Martha, and she told me Mr. Maitland had just left her bedside—that he had been repeating many beautiful passages in the Bible to her, and had talked in a way which had greatly cheered and elevated her mind. I look forward with great pleasure to making his acquaintance.”

Florence’s eyes glistened with delight—

she went to bed, and dreamed all night of little birds and old gentlemen.

Next morning Mr. Maitland made his promised visit, and Florence was fully gratified in the pleasure that visit seemed to bestow. His conversation was of a superior order, cultivated and intellectual; his manners polished, yet simple and unaffected. There was also a tinge of melancholy, a subdued gentleness, in his whole demeanour, probably increased by his situation, which strongly impressed all her family in his favour: for in that shade of sorrow which sometimes flitted across his pale countenance, there was nothing gloomy or austere, it was resignation the most entire, a piety which dwelt in his inmost heart: his eyes were closed to the beauties of this passing scene, but a light had broken in upon his soul, brightening and gladdening every lonely hour: he had found that peace which passeth knowledge. Mr. Maitland was from Scotland. Mr. Percy remembered having often heard his name mentioned during a winter he had spent there after leaving Cambridge, but they had never met. He was

then blessed with an affectionate wife, and one sweet daughter; it had been the will of Heaven to deprive him of both within a few years of each other, and he had become a wanderer, till the increasing dimness of his sight had induced him to return to England; and as his medical attendants had expressed an opinion that when his sight was entirely gone, an operation might be attempted with some prospect of success, he had resolved to reside during the interval at Malvern, in the hope of the pure air there benefiting his general health.

From this time he became a constant visitor; acquaintance soon ripened into friendship, and the Priory was to him as a second home. To the girls he was soon an object of the strongest interest and attachment. Mary would watch every expression of his countenance, and silently obey his slightest wish, and her sister loved him with all the ardour of her warm affections: his attachment to them was not inferior; it breathed in every word and was to be seen in every action. Mary's gentle winning ways had stolen deeply

into his heart; and as for Florence, he thought of his own lost child, and daily prayed that he might not a second time set up an idol in his breast. They spent some hours of every day with him, generally in Mary's bower, reading aloud to him history and poetry; a mutual pleasure and a mutual benefit, for it was delightful for them to hear him say, that those hours seemed to renew the pleasures of his youth, and from his judicious remarks and cultivated taste they derived incalculable advantage.

Mary was never weary of Robertson or Hume, but Florence would sometimes rebel and exclaim, "Now, enough of that monster Henry for this forenoon at least. 'Oh, is there no cure or cause in nature for those hard hearts?'—delay the execution; let poor Catherine Howard live one other day;—and now for the refreshment of Milton.

"Sweet is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit, and flower,

Glistening with dew, fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers ; and sweet the coming on
Of grateful evening mild.

“Mary, if you do not shut that large book, it will be grateful evening mild, and we shall have to go home in the dew.”

“Oh ! Florence, Florence, the dew when it is not yet mid-day.”

“Only a poetical licence, Mary,—a real superior poet never attends to time or place—is it not so, Mr. Maitland?”

Mr. Maitland smiled, but sighed, for it was at such moments he felt the full pressure of his deprivation ; felt what it would have been to him could he have looked upon the serenity of Mary’s face, or on that bright girl now sparkling by his side.

“Florence would sometimes talk of the joy which would be diffused over them all, were his sight to be restored : but again checking herself, fearful of raising hopes which were not to be realised, she would exclaim, “And should God will it otherwise, have you not Florence’s eyes and Mary’s also—two pair of blue eyes, and so exactly alike, that

choose which you will, you will still see the same with both. And who knows that you would like Florence as well could you look upon her with other eyes?" she continued, playfully taking his hand. "Do you think you could love a little girl with a turned-up nose, and a wide mouth—a steady, grave, reflecting character, with a great deal of good in her, but still a sad fright?"

"O Florence," exclaimed her sister, "how can you say so?"

"What, Mary, you surely do not mean to say it is not so, for that would be praising yourself; and when did my modest sister Mary ever praise herself. Do you know, Mr. Maitland, she used to be such a frightened little thing, that if mamma had said to her suddenly, 'Mary, is that you?'—had it not been for her love of truth, she would invariably have answered, 'No, mamma, it is not me.'"

"But, Florence, that was years ago; I am not frightened now; not at this moment at least; how can I? And suddenly lifting Mr. Maitland's hand as she spoke, she pressed it to her lips. Ashamed of her own enthusiasm,

and blushing all over, she as suddenly let
drop. For some time she was silent—when
she spoke again, it was in a voice more timid
than ever.

CHAPTER III.

THUS cherished by both, how often would Mr. Maitland think of his first address to Florence ; “ I am a solitary being, and have few to love.”—Now was he once more surrounded by the fondest objects of affection, and silently and fervently did he lift up his heart to that gracious God who had again made existence so dear a blessing. Mrs. Percy felt for him the affection of a sister, and on no subject with regard to her daughters—from the most important to the slightest trifle—did she neglect to consult him equally with her husband ; indeed Mr. Percy would often say, when applied to, “ Ask Mr. Maitland, my love, I have made over the girls to him ; I have given him a present of Mary and

Florence. Ah ! he begins, I have no doubt, to find the gift somewhat troublesome. Come here, girls, and confess what you have been about, that you are thus thrown back upon me."

But there was yet another small claimant for Mr. Maitland's favour, for no sooner did he take his accustomed place in the family circle than the little Charles would scramble up upon his knee, and putting up his small mouth to be kissed, would say, "Now Charlie sing you a song—what song me sing you *a* day?" Amongst his numerous collection it was indeed no easy choice ; for though he could speak but most imperfectly, and in many words Mary's patient endeavours to get him to pronounce the letter *r* had completely failed, yet he could sing every tune he had ever heard, and the original words of his own composition met with unqualified approbation from both old and young. It was indeed sweet to hear him singing on the stairs of a morning when nurse was carrying him down to pay his early visit in the breakfast parlour ; and often in the night would he start up in

his little crib, and begin singing the old English song of "Hearts of Oak," to the delight of his sisters, who from their vicinity to the nursery were often awakened by these sudden bursts of patriotism. Thus to Mr. Maitland did nearly two years glide happily away, and that morning dawned which threatened once again to make the world a wilderness to him.

It had been arranged by Mr. Percy that the communication was to be made to him in the evening when he came as usual to join their little family concert. It was gently done—he said little; in fact, he felt at first too much agitated to speak, but the change in his countenance was instantaneous; there was an expression of sorrowful resignation they could not bear to look upon.

"Come girls," said Mr. Percy, after a short interval, "let us have a little music; something cheerful. Come let us sing, 'Hark, the lark!'"

Mrs. Percy sat down to the piano to play the accompaniment. Mr. Percy sang with

them; but it would not do, the girls were scarcely able to raise a note. Mr. Maitland had retired into a far-off corner of the room, and in a few minutes they were seated by him, each holding a hand in theirs; their tears were dropping fast upon it. Mr. Percy advanced towards them. Florence suddenly looked up, "Papa," she said, "why cannot Mr. Maitland go with us? O indeed, indeed, we must not part!"

"Gently, Florence—gently—think what you are saying. Can you expect Mr. Maitland to leave his country; and at such an important moment would you remove him from his medical advisers?"

"If that is all," Mr. Maitland answered, "I would not give it a moment's thought. No; could I believe that a poor helpless being such as I am would not add to your other cares, I would willingly accompany you to the farthest corner of the world; seriously, the distance of Provence would be nothing to me. I could easily return with John in the spring, were my eyes

then in a situation to admit of this operation being attempted. My absence from you would be but short."

A few more words were said; it became a settled point; Mr. Maitland was to accompany them. The spirits of the girls rose from this moment; all threatening clouds had cleared away; their horizon was calm and bright again as a summer sky, and they were seen as usual, next morning, wandering with Mr. Maitland over hill and dale, listening with delight to his vivid sketches of his early youth, or dwelling with deep interest on occasional touches of his later sorrows. He spoke to them sometimes of his daughter, of her playful vivacity, her angelic sweetness, and the deep, pious, cheerful resignation with which she met her early death. To become like Erselie, (for so after a Greek lady, a friend of her mother's, she had been called,) and to be to him as a daughter, became the fond ambition of both sisters. Their attachment to Mr. Maitland was unbounded; and it was sweet to see those young girls guiding his uncertain steps up the steep ascent, or seated by his

side in the sheltered valley, painting to him the hue of every wild flower which was springing beneath their feet, in language as glowing as their own bright colours.

Thus had the gentle current of their lives glided on; but the season was advancing, the woods were showing the yellow tints of autumn—a few more days and they were to leave the Priory. Mary stood before her cage of rare birds, deliberating with herself as to whose care they were to be committed. Dear little orderly things they were, dining regularly at five, and going to bed at seven; yet with some small human infirmities, always singing loudest when one wished them quiet, and one little grey thing in particular showing such a tyrannical love of power, as to require whole days of solitary confinement to subdue its warlike propensities. Who was now to see that they regularly had food for their stated meals, and who was to adjust their little quarrels? It was at last agreed upon that they were to be the gipsy's care. A more faithful guardian could not have been appointed.

All was now bustle and preparation; even

little Charles was heard exclaiming, "Me going *a* France; me must pack;" and hour after hour would he busy himself with his small arrangements, packing and unpacking his box of ninepins; stuffing into it every bit of paper or shred of silk he could pick up, and secreting nurse's cotton reels in holes undiscoverable. Suddenly his night clothes disappeared, to her indescribable consternation; but they were found at last in a box of books which stood packed in Mr. Percy's dressing-room.

"My little man," said Florence, "now that you are going to France, and packing up your things like a gentleman, you must be a good and a brave boy. No more crying now when you are washed in the morning. What was it I heard in the nursery this morning; was it a buffalo?"

"No buffalo, Flo, no cowie, just a cattie."

"But it must not even be a cattie, it must be a little fishie; you should swim about in the water like a little fishie."

"But me no like to be a little fishie and be *drowned*." And to change the unpleasant

subject, he suddenly snatched up the stick he was riding upon, and began to play a violin accompaniment with it on his little arm, to the tune of "Blue bonnets over the border."

Florence could not resist the arch expression of his face; she caught him up in her arms and kissed him; bravery, she thought would come in time, and meanwhile was there ever so droll or musical a child?

CHAPTER IV.

It was on the evening before the day they were to leave their home, that Mary and Florence, each with a basket hanging on her arm, bent their steps towards the gipsies' cottage. It stood at the foot of the avenue of fine tall trees leading to the Priory; various creepers and China roses were blooming on its whitewashed walls, and clustering round its little proch, and the neat garden, which stretched behind, was gay with the bright and glowing tints of the autumn flowers. As they advanced they heard the sound of youthful voices, and paused upon the threshold.

"They are just finishing family prayers," said Mary; "the children are singing the evening hymn."

It was Florence's own favourite hymn, which at the gipsy's earnest request she had taught her little grandchildren:—the voices ceased, and softly opening the door they entered the cottage. The gipsy sat in her arm chair by the cheerful fire and clean swept hearth, and two rosy little girls stood at her knee; her dress was scrupulously neat, a cap white as the drifted snow came close in about her face, and a few grey hairs shaded her calm brow; there was a change indeed—the change was in her heart, and the light of religious hope, of deep and humble faith, shone in every feature of her serene countenance. Our old friend Ralph sat near her at a little table, with the Bible from which he had been reading still open before him, and at his side was a blooming young woman, with a baby in her arms, the mother of his children.

“O my dear young ladies!” exclaimed the gipsy, (as they advanced into the room,) “I feel that you are coming to bid me a long, long farewell.”

“Not a long farewell, I hope,” said Mary, endeavouring to speak in a cheerful voice;

"I trust we shall not be very long away. See what we have brought you for these little ones;" and putting aside the flowers which covered the top of the basket, she took up a little frock and tippet. "We have each made a Sunday's frock for the little girls, and before they are worn out, I trust we shall be back to renew the gift."

"May heaven bless you both," said the gipsy, "for you ever are the messengers of good to me. And you, Miss Florence—O but for you, what might I not have been at this moment! Does that sun, that is now sinking to his rest, ever set, or rise again, that I do not lift up my heart in gratitude, to him who made you (infant as you were) the instrument of everlasting good to me? Yes, go where you may, on the wide ocean, or on the fruitful land, in joy or in sorrow, in sickness or in death, you will be followed by the prayers of a grateful heart."

"Let us get away as quickly as we can," whispered Florence aside to her sister, "I cannot bear it—O what a host of recollections are rushing on my heart! it seems to me now

but as yesterday, when I lay in the cleft of the rock, a poor sorrowful, frightened child ; how have blessings since been poured upon me, and have I thought as I ought of those things ? O no, her praises humble me, for I feel at this moment that I am nothing."

A few kind words were addressed by them to all. Again and again the gipsy blessed them, and they left the cottage.

"How sad these partings are !" said Mary, as she sighed deeply ; "and the worst is still to come, for we are now about to visit poor old Thomas, probably for the last time ; this last attack of illness has changed him greatly ; I fear we can hardly expect him to live till we return."

Old Thomas was now frequently incapable of work, but the garden continued still a great pleasure and interest to him ; he gave directions as to all that required to be done, and in his two grandsons he found able assistants.

The old man was in his accustomed place by the fire, his daughter busy in preparing his supper ; all was neat and comfortable around him ; he looked serene and hap-

py, though worn, and evidently much enfeebled.

As they entered he welcomed them with a cheerful voice. "Sit down, my dear young ladies," he said, "sit down, I hae been looking for you all this blessed day ; and what is this you hae brought the old man ?—my favourite flowers, I reckon."

"Yes," said Mary, "we have brought you all the flowers you love best, and we have brought you also this little book, which has the hymn in it which you make me repeat to you so often ; the print is very small, but Betsy will read it to you if you cannot make it out. Betsy," she continued, "will you give me that little basin with fresh water, and we will dress the flowers." They seated themselves at the table, and busied themselves with their employment.

The old man sat gazing upon them with deep interest. "My dear bairns," he said, "for so I maun call you, for the last time,—it is ne'er again in this world that my auld e'en will look upon sae sweet a sight. You hae grown up before me like the roses in

your bonny bower, and you hae floated by me in my dreams like the water lilies o' the stream; but long before you return to your father's hall, the green grass will be growing o'er my quiet grave; but wherefore should that be a thought o' grief either to you or me? what should an old man do, who has numbered his fourscore years, but lay himself down in peace, and cheerfully resign his soul into his Maker's hands. Surely I may say, that 'goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life,' and that he has 'blessed my latter end even more than my beginning.' O may you lift up your young hearts to him daily and hourly in that far distant land, for it is he that can make 'the wilderness to blossom as the rose,' and from the lowest valley, or the mountain's height, his ear is ever open to your prayer. And now, Miss Mary, will you say to me once more those words o' grace, that will now be my daily and my nightly thought, then in the watches o' the night, will the last sound o' your sweet voice bring to my mind words o' comfort and of hope."

Mary made a strong effort to control her emotion, while she repeated the following lines :

“ ‘ When gathering clouds around I view,
And days are dark and friends are few,
On Him I lean, who not in vain
Experienced every human pain ;
He sees my wants, allays my fears,
And counts and treasures up my tears. ’ ”

The old man sat wrapped in deep attention, as she went through the beautiful verses which followed ; but at the closing lines, he clasped his hands and raised his eyes to heaven, while Mary with a faltering voice proceeded—

“ ‘ And oh, when safely I have past
Through every conflict but the last,
Wilt thou who once for me hast bled,
Wilt thou in sickness make my bed,
And point to realms of endless day
And wipe the latest tear away. ’ ”

“ Amen ! ” said the old man fervently. The girls bent their heads, and silently invoked a blessing—for a moment they felt the pressure

of his withered hands—in the next they had glided from the room.

“Alas !” said Florence, as she that night stretched herself upon her bed, and laid her aching head upon her sister’s breast; “alas that I could ever think with delight on the flowery fields of Provence—they will be indeed all too dearly purchased.”

CHAPTER V.

THE next morning they left the Priory. The last of the preparations consisted in the completion of a small travelling cage for Cheri, to be hung up in Mr. Maitland's carriage, —John had been strongly advised by the other servants to leave the little bird behind, but he repelled the idea with indignation.

“What !” he said, “leave Cheri behind—leave the creature to whom my master owes the principal happiness of his life? No, no, that's not our way in Scotland of treating a faithful friend. And look to Mrs. Nurse, look at the trouble she has taken in fitting up that fine basket for Frisk—the best lord of the land might be grateful for such a bed.”

Cheri and Frisk were accordingly of the party, and displayed a degree of fortitude in

quitting their happy home, which the other members of the family in vain struggled to acquire. Cheri sang louder than he had ever sung before, and Frisk wagged his tail.

Never had the Priory looked more beautiful than at the moment the travellers were about to quit it for an uncertain period. It was a bright October morning, the yellow woods were yet sparkling in the early dew, the soft green hills reposing in the sunshine; and the smoke from the cheerful cottages rose slowly on the quiet air, and mingled with the deep azure of the unclouded sky. As they passed through the village several of the inhabitants ran for a little way by the side of the carriage, and some of the young girls threw in nosegays of flowers.

“God bless you all, my good friends!” exclaimed Mr. Percy, leaning from the carriage window, and waving his hand, “and now go back I entreat you—if it is the will of Heaven, we shall all return to you again, and I trust at no very distant day.”

It was a wish which was echoed in every breast. Mrs. Percy could only silently ac-

knowledge the blessings which were poured upon her ; she repressed all violent emotion, but looked extremely pale.

The little Charles was the only one whose spirits did not flag,—he sat on Mary's knee, delighted with his situation, and making his remarks on every object as he passed along ; but observing, at last, that he was not answered as usual, he peeped up under Mary's bonnet, and exclaimed,

“What for you cry, Minny? me no cry, me brave boy : me no *frightened* going a France ; me laughing.”

“Dear boy,” said Mary, “I am not frightened, I am only sorry.”

“But me no sorry, me go with papa and mamma, and Minny and Flo.

“Yes,” said Mrs. Percy, “and you should be a good, grateful little boy, for having such kind friends to love you, and to take care of you.”

“Me grateful, me grateful in the court a morning.”

“Grateful in the court this morning,” said Mrs. Percy ; “what do you mean, love?”

"Me grateful, not a big birdy—big birdy stand a one leg all the winter, all the winter."

"It is the stork he is thinking of," exclaimed Florence, laughing; "I heard nurse telling him that the poor stork stood on one leg all the winter; and that he should be grateful for his warm bed."

"He is a dear little fellow," exclaimed Mr. Percy, kissing him, "a very pleasant little intelligent travelling-companion, and we are much obliged to him for having given a more cheerful turn to our ideas. My love," he continued, turning to Mrs. Percy, and taking her hand, "I fear the emotion and fatigue of this day will be too much for you; we must go but a little way at first."

"I don't think that will be necessary," Mrs. Percy answered, in a cheerful tone of voice; "believe me, dear Charles, I am infinitely stronger than I appear to be. I had several things still to arrange this morning, things which could not be sealed up till the last moment, yet I do not feel at all fatigued; no, I may say with our dear little boy, I go with all I love, and am neither sorry nor afraid.—

Dear boy," she continued, addressing the child, "who is it that has given you a papa and mamma, and kind sisters to take care of you?"

"It is God, mamma."

"And how should you thank God for being so good to you?"

"Me should love him in my heart, mamma."

"Sweet child, may that love increase more and more, and that small seed already sown in your infant heart bring forth much fruit! What a delightful feeling is this love," continued Mrs. Percy, "to look around on all those treasures of existence, and to feel that they are the creation of Him, whose very essence is love—to know that it is he who has implanted these affections in our hearts, which make the charm of our present lives, and will be still further exalted in eternity, to one pure feeling of eternal love. O how congenial to our natures to bring the out-pourings of a grateful heart to the footstool of his throne!"

The little Charles's religious instruction was as yet confined simply to this feeling of

love to God; he was taught to love God for having given him kind friends, and refreshing sleep, for having made the sun so bright, and the green earth so full of flowers; in every thing he was taught to love and acknowledge God.

The spirits of the party gradually improved, the weather continued fine, the country through which they passed was rich and varied; and without either accident or adventure, they arrived late on the second evening at the house of Mrs. Douglas, in Grosvenor Square. They were received by that lady with much kindness; she was delighted with the little Charles, whom she had not seen for a year, and embraced Mary and Florence with much affection. All were gratified by her kindness to Mr. Maitland, who was received completely as one of the family, and, if possible, with more marked attention.

Florence's first care always was to make Mr. Maitland feel at home. She seated him in the arm-chair by the fire, and as she put his cup of tea on the small table which she had placed at his side, she said, taking his

hand, and pressing it affectionately, "You are not fatigued, I hope, or beginning to regret leaving England?"

"Far from it," he answered; "I do not think that I ever set out on a journey with a much more cheerful heart; certainly never with a more grateful one. No, dear Florence! you will only find it difficult to get rid of me again. I don't think I shall return to England in the spring; I begin now to be quite of your opinion, that two pair of eyes are better than one; I am not quite sure that I should now enjoy being able to help myself in a common-place way; my young handmaids are too delightful, and even little Charles begins now to be serviceable to me. It was but yesterday he almost pulled his little arms off, endeavouring to drag towards the fire a great heavy arm-chair for me at one of the inns. Yes," he continued, stooping down to caress Frisk, who lay crouched at his feet; "yes, even your attentions, my good old fellow, I have gratefully to acknowledge."

Frisk had now attained that period of life when the love of ease and fire-side enjoyments

had become very dear to him ; he generally apologised to the other members of the family for not accompanying them in their walks, by opening his eyes for a moment upon them as they passed along, and graciously wagging his tail ; but Florence he seldom omitted to follow, and Mr. Maitland never ; he might have been seen every morning trotting gently down the avenue and taking up his station at the hall-door of that gentleman's residence, there waiting patiently to escort him to the Priory ; and every evening did he return with him again, never leaving his side till the same hall-door had again received its inmate.

"I can assure you," observed Florence, "Frisk's travelling comforts have been well attended to on this occasion. You can have no idea how nicely he lies in his basket at nurse's feet on the dickey."

"Yes," answered Mr. Maitland, "John seems rather envious of that basket ; he told me the first lord of the land might be grateful for such a bed."

"Would not my lord feel rather cramped ?" said Florence, laughing.

"Yes," he answered, "rather in straightened circumstances, I should think; but you know, Florence, that is not very uncommon, even for a lord."

Mr. Maitland was no longer the melancholy old gentleman of former days; he was always now in cheerful spirits, and often lively: even little Charles was heard to observe, "Me like to sing and play a fiddle to Mr. Maitland, for he laughs very much, very much."

After breakfast next day, Mrs. Douglas ordered the carriage and proposed an airing in the park. Mrs. Percy wished to remain quiet, but the girls and little Charles accompanied their aunt. After they had gone round the park, she desired the coachman to drive to Howel and James's, and she was soon deeply engaged in purchases. On entering the shop the attention of both the girls had been arrested by a beautiful silk cloak lined with fur, which was hanging up: they stood before it in silent admiration for a moment—in turning away their eyes met.

"Mary," said Florence, "I know what is passing through your mind; you are thinking

what a delightful cloak this would be for mamma: so warm, so light, and just that rich brown colour she is so fond of. Oh! if we could purchase it for her. I have two guineas, how much have you?"

"Three," answered her sister.

They eagerly inquired the price.

"Twenty guineas, mem. Yes," continued the person they had addressed, "twenty guineas is the lowest farthing, and it is a cheap cloak; it is lined with a very valuable fur, so light, so warm—and it is a fur which will always look as well as it does at this moment—it will last for ever;" and he held up the cloak as he spoke, so as to display it in the most favourable point of view.

Alas! it was a hopeless case, and turning away in silent disappointment, they crossed over to where their aunt was standing.

"My dear girls," said Mrs. Douglas, "here are two pretty little purses I have bought for you; but," she continued, in a low voice, "as an empty purse is not a lucky present, I have put ten guineas into each. Now don't be losing time in thanking me, I know all you

would say, so go and do each of you make choice quickly of one of those pretty bonnets which are hanging up, for those are frightful things you are wearing now, and with the rest of the money do as you please."

The girls exchanged a look : their resolution was taken.

"My dear aunt," said Florence, "It would be difficult to carry those fine bonnets with us, and as"—she hesitated.

"And as you are going to Paris," you would say ; "well, Florence, I do believe you are right," she continued, "you certainly will get still more fashionable bonnets there."

"Aunt, I do not mean that."

But Mrs. Douglas did not attend to her. Taking little Charles by the hand, she led him into another room, where she wished to let him hear a musical clock, desiring her nieces to follow her there when they had made up their minds as to whether the bonnets were to be made choice of or not. Not a moment was spent in hesitation ; the cloak was purchased, and desired to be sent home to Grosvenor Square that evening at eight

o'clock, addressed to Miss Percy, and the party returned home mutually pleased with each other. Mrs. Douglas had quite gained little Charles's heart, by the present of a beautiful whip, and by the amusement she had procured him; and anxious to show his gratitude, he sat on her knee during dessert, sang all his best songs, and was particularly fortunate in his violin accompaniments."

"I was to have dined to day at Lady Jane B.'s," observed Mrs. Douglas, looking round the table, "but how much more delightful is this party. Brother," she continued, with a sigh, "you are a happy man, and if you remain long abroad, I think I must join you on the continent."

About eight o'clock a single knock at the hall-door announced a parcel, and Mary and Florence exchanged an anxious look, but nurse, faithful to her promise, was on the watch—the cloak was conveyed in safety to Mrs. Percy's dressing room, the slip of paper committed to her care pinned upon it, and that night, while the girls were undressing, and before the important business of putting

in the last curl-papers was completed, Mrs. Percy knocked at their door to thank and embrace her dear children; but at their earnest request, it was agreed that no farther notice should be taken of the cloak, lest their generous aunt should wish to renew her gift."

"Mrs. Douglas parted with them next morning after breakfast with much regret; and as Mr. Percy wished to cross to Dieppe, they set out for Brighton, and by evening were comfortably lodged in the hotel of the Old Ship, which, from its vicinity to the place of embarkation, was fixed upon as a desirable situation.

Here did the girls, after having retired for the night, sit listening while they undressed to the murmur of that sea, which on the morrow was to bear them to an unknown land.

"There is certainly something mournful in the slowly-increasing sound of those distant waves," observed Mary, as she shook back her hair, and her long glossy ringlets fell in profusion on her neck and shoulders.

"Yes," said Florence, "very mournful. I

have been feeling the influence of that sound all the evening ; and now that it draws so near, there is something still more mournful in the idea of leaving England ; how often to-night have I thought of those sad words of the royal Mary—‘ Farewell, farewell, happy France, I shall never see you more.’—We shall be experiencing similar feelings to-morrow on leaving England.”

“ Yes, Florence, but we quit our country in happier circumstances ; we hope to return to it again, and we go with all those we love : yet my heart is heavy also ; I fear it is that we do not trust in God as we ought : are we not equally, and in all places, under the protecting care of Heaven ? How different is it with dear mamma ! No privation of fortune, no change of country ruffles her ; loving us all with the most intense affection, enjoying everything ; yet God is never a moment absent from her thoughts. Good night, Florence, let us pray that we may one day resemble her.” She covered her face with her hands, and remained some time silent ; then rising with a look of holy serenity upon her

young fair brow, she sank upon her knees by the side of her bed : Florence knelt by her sister's side, and soon after, clasped in each other's arms, they dropped into sweet and calm repose.

Next morning Mr. Percy entered into an engagement with the captain of a packet, which was to sail for Dieppe at twelve, and their heavy baggage was removed ; but when the hour of embarkation arrived, they were informed, that unexpected business would detain the captain for some hours ; and it was past nine at night before they were summoned by a sailor, belonging to the vessel, to repair to the shore. On reaching the beach, they found that the night was becoming extremely dark, and a small drizzling rain beginning to fall : lights were glancing up and down upon the shore, and rough voices were calling to each other. Several men with lanterns in their hands advanced towards them, and they were then informed that the packet was out at sea—that they must be rowed to it in a small boat ; but that from the tide being so far back, it would be necessary, even to

reach the boat, that they should be carried for a little way in the sailors' arms. This was by no means pleasant, but before either Mary or Florence had time to express their dislike to this measure, they found themselves lifted from the ground by two of the sailors.

"Stop a moment," they both exclaimed at once: "O take care of the old gentleman. Where is he, where is Mr. Maitland?"

"Here I am, dear girls," he replied, "close at your side, though somewhat in an elevated situation: a perfect Hercules has mounted me on his shoulders. Now, steady, my good fellow, let us wait for the ladies."

"Yes," exclaimed Mr. Percy, as he committed Mrs. Percy with no small anxiety to the care of another of the sailors—"yes, my friends, this is rather an unpleasant business for the ladies, so do not move till I give the word; let us keep altogether at least. Nurse, whereabouts are you, and where is the little boy?"

"They are taking him from me at this very moment, Sir: the dear child was sound asleep in my arms. O dear, dear, but this

is sad work. Where have you taken master Charles, where is my darling?"

"Me here, nurse, me in my crib, sleeping," exclaimed the little boy, as he, half awake, lifted his head for a moment from the sailor's shoulder.

"Hear ye that, mistress? the youngster, God bless him! is as pleased with his berth, as if it were the state cabin. Aye, aye, you may trust to a sailor's arm in a worse pinch than this!"

"Let us move forward," said Mr. Percy, "we are all ready."

The party proceeded over the wet sands, and then for a little way through the swelling sea: they were carried in safety, and deposited in the boat.

"Here, mistress," exclaimed the sailor, who carried little Charles as he stood in the water, and held the child towards her — "here, mistress, is the youngster, safe and sound, God bless him! Now, steady, boys, steady."

The child, awakened by these familiar words, lifted up his little head, and began to sing—

“ Hearts of Oak are our ships,
Jolly tars are our men ;
We always are ready,
Steady, boys ! steady !
We'll fight and we'll conquer again and again ! ”

The sailor stood transfixed for a moment with delight,—then calling out, “ Clear the decks—make way for the young admiral,” the little fellow was received on board with a royal salute, in the form of a loud and long huzza, which seemed echoed from the shore, and died away upon the waters. The cliffs threw their dark shadows over the ocean—the boat cut rapidly through the waves—and as a few pale stars shone out from a streak of clear sky which appeared in the horizon, they became aware that their party had been increased by the addition of three figures, who sat muffled up in cloaks, in the stern of the boat. The packet proved to be a good way out at sea, but on a signal-gun being fired, and a light hung out, the seamen redoubled their efforts, and soon they were alongside of the vessel, when one of the hitherto silent figures, throwing aside his

cloak, sprang up the side of the ship, exclaiming, "Now, hand me up the ladies, my good fellows," and fair and softly they stood, one by one, upon the deck. As he lifted Florence, he whispered in her ear, "Is this you, Emily?" And her "No," in a voice scarcely audible, was answered by a hurried apology as he placed her on deck by her sister's side.

Soon all was bustle and activity: the shrill sound of the boatswain's whistle was followed by the loud hoarse cry of, "All hands, up anchor a hoy!" and in a few minutes more the packet was gliding swiftly before the wind, and the ladies had gone down below, and retired to their berths for the night. As there were but slender accommodations, they did not undress; and the girls being at first too much excited by their situation to feel inclined to sleep, lay for some time whispering to each other.

On entering the cabin they had observed a young elegant-looking girl stretched upon a sofa, shading her face with her hand, and apparently very unwell; and Florence's attention was soon arrested by hearing some

one enter the cabin—and the same voice which had so lately whispered in her ear, exclaimed, as he advanced towards the reclining figure on the sofa, “How are you, Emily—how are you now?”

“Better, Charles, better; but don’t stay, I entreat you;” and she added something so low, that Florence could only catch the word *ladies*, and immediately heard his retreating footsteps.

“Did you hear that, Mary?” exclaimed Florence: “did you observe those names, Charles and Emily? Is it possible—can it be the Charles and Emily of the apple-pie?—Oh if she would only remove her hand for a little moment, and I could see her nose. Don’t you remember Emily’s nose was mentioned as being particularly good——”

“Oh Florence, what an imagination you have: consider only how many Emilys there must be in England, and how ——”

“And how many good noses, you would say,” added Florence, smiling; “but still I

* See Part I. of “Mary and Florence,” p. 112.

feel a strong presentiment that I am right, and I must try to investigate this matter further; and gently putting aside a little way the silk curtain which hung in front of their bed, she lay with her eyes fixed upon the reclining figure on the sofa, till sleep overpowered her.

CHAPTER VI.

It was late next morning before either of the girls awoke; and on going on deck, they found Mr. and Mrs. Percy in conversation with an elderly lady, and in her son and daughter, who were seated by her, they recognised the Charles and Emily of the previous evening. The young man's appearance was highly prepossessing, just such a youth as must have formerly been bright and bold looking, with curly hair; and in the fair blue-eyed girl, with regular features and a faultless nose, Florence saw before her, without the shadow of a doubt, the identical Emily of the apple-pie: to ascertain her possession of a lark, seemed now almost immaterial;

but full of the speculations of the night before, she had brought Cheri on deck with her : it was not, however, till the supposed Emily had made some trifling observation with regard to the weather, that Florence had courage to address her,—she then asked, in a low, timid voice,

“ Are you fond of birds ? ”

“ Yes,” the young lady replied, “ I am extremely fond of them.”

But she, too, seemed timid, for she added no more ; and Florence, thrown out in this first attempt, found she must rally her courage, and try again.

“ My poor old dog Frisk is jealous of my affection for this little bird,” she observed ; “ but certainly birds are the most interesting pets of all—don’t you think so ? ”

“ Yes, they are interesting, certainly—but dogs are still more affectionate, and more of companions : indeed, cats are also capable of strong attachment. I have a most beautiful Angola cat at home, with long glossy hair, and most intelligent eyes, and she is at present the happy mother of six little kittens.”

Alas, alas! the possession of a cat and six kittens argued little for the present existence of a lark.

“The kittens are beautiful little creatures,” continued Miss Seymour, “and all so different!”

Florence almost groaned,—the description of the appearance and intellectual qualities of six unrivalled kittens, she felt was about to follow: what was it to her their rare endowments, their foreign birth and high descent—how bring the subject back to bipeds, again? and with a sort of desperate courage she abruptly asked, “But have you no pet birds at present?”

Miss Seymour looked up for a moment; she could not but think Florence strangely inquisitive on the subject of pet birds, but she answered with much sweetness, “No, I have never had a pet bird, since I lost a favourite; but I beg your pardon, I am afraid you are ill; what can I have said—how have I distressed you?”

“I am not ill, I am not distressed,” Florence hastily answered, her colour increasing

at every word; "pray, pray go on; you were saying you had a favourite."

"Yes, I had a favourite lark given me when a child: I do believe my little bird died of old age; but I should be ashamed to tell you how I grieved for it."

Florence exchanged a look with her sister, and breathed freely again, and the moment they were alone she exclaimed, "Now, Mary, see how well my investigation is going on! I have now the Charles, the Emily, the nose, and the lark; I want nothing but the apple-pie,—and that would after all," she added, laughing, "be but an empty proof. Well, I do not wonder now that papa says there is nothing so interesting as historical research, and that he could pass his life in the state-paper office. How delighted I felt when she said she had a favourite lark! I trembled all over till she had pronounced the word: how did you feel, Mary?"

"Very happy for you, Florence, very happy, but amused also at your agitation, for you seemed rather to be saying, 'Have you

any pet wolves, ready to eat us up?" than, "Have you any pet birds?" "

"Do you think Miss Seymour observed it?" inquired Florence, anxiously; "I should be so sorry she thought me rude, for I like her extremely."

"She certainly looked up at you for a moment with surprise, but she is perfectly well-bred, and she answered you immediately, as if she had observed nothing."

"Well, I hope indeed she did observe nothing," Florence answered; "and now I must go and tell Mr. Maitland all about it."

In Mr. Maitland, Florence always found a willing auditor, and on the present occasion he was much amused by the lively way in which she detailed her bright imaginings.

"Well, Florence," he said, "I admit your proofs, they are clear and satisfactory; all now depends upon the apple-pie. I agree with Mary, that link is an important one; however, this contrary wind is in your favour; the captain tells me he has no hope now of reaching Dieppe before evening, so we are

to dine at three o'clock, and perhaps at dinner there may be an apple-pie ; something may come of that. Judging from his firm manly voice, I should think the youth might have courage unshrinkingly to face it now ; but keep your eye upon the young lady, mark her well ; for, depend upon it, she will either blush or turn deadly pale."

Florence laughed, but awaited anxiously the hour of three, and when at dinner she found herself seated next Mr. Maitland, and opposite the stranger youth, she glanced her eye rapidly over the table, and only felt consoled by the idea that an apple-pie might still make its appearance with the other sweets. Dinner proceeded, and in assisting and attending to Mr. Maitland, she had almost forgotten the subject of her hopes and fears, when she was suddenly startled by the stranger's voice addressing her, and inquiring, if he might have the pleasure of helping her to some apple-pie.

The effect of this simple request was such as to make him regard her with evident surprise, for Florence trembled, coloured vio-

lently, and was unable to answer. As she had slightly bent her head, however, he proceeded to help her, remarking, at the same time, that there was rather a scarcity of fruit: as he spoke he glanced a look at his sister and smiled; then turning to Mr. Percy, he observed, "This scarcity of fruit recalls to my mind a grievous enormity of my younger days. I trust my principles are now somewhat more confirmed, but they once gave way entirely, before the unexpected appearance of an apple-pie; and the worst part of the business was, that I drew my poor little sister into the scrape, and somehow or other, to our astonishment and dismay, the story got into print."

"Yes," said Mr. Percy, with a smile, "I have had the pleasure of reading that story to a deeply-interested audience, and allow me to say, I feel extremely happy in now being able to make the personal acquaintance of Mr. and Miss Seymour."

Florence for some time scarcely dared to look up, but sat blushing and smiling inwardly, delighted with a confirmation of her

various speculations beyond her most sanguine hopes. Mr. Percy was too indulgent not to enter into her delight in having her ideal visions thus fully realised ; yet he trembled for the consequences on her future character ; she was but slowly recovering from having been allowed the perusal of one of Mrs. Radcliffe's Novels ; it had proved a dangerous experiment, the " Romance of the Pyrenees " had almost turned her head ; but this romance of real life, this Charles and Emily, for a hero and heroine, what might not be the consequence ? They were to part on the morrow, however, and to time and distance he must trust for bringing her back to the more ordinary occurrences of human life.

CHAPTER VII.

THE girls during the evening were making rapid advances towards an intimacy with the interesting Emily; and Miss Seymour was much amused by Florence's account of the eager anxiety with which she had determined from the first to identify her with the Emily of her youthful acquaintance.

"I am afraid," said Florence, "you must have thought me very rude in the way in which I questioned you?"

"No, far from rude, but a little abrupt, perhaps: it was not so much what you said, as your manner of saying it; you seemed to me so timid, and yet so anxious to speak, and also so resolved on having an answer; and I did certainly think that pet birds had some

mysterious influence over you, you spoke of them with such extreme agitation."

"Yes," said Florence, "you know so much depended on my being able to ascertain that fact as to your having a pet lark; if you had said you had had a pet canary, I should have gone wild, I do believe."

"But what could have put all this into your imagination at first?" inquired Miss Seymour. "I can understand your going on with great spirit after the idea had once seized you, but how came you to think of such a thing?"

"Why I don't know," answered Florence; "it first struck me, when your brother came into the cabin, and addressed you on the sofa, and every moment the idea became more and more confirmed. If you ask Mary, I am afraid she will tell you that my imagination does sometimes run away with me."

"Yes, sometimes; but I cannot regret it at this moment, Florence, when it has led to such pleasant consequences."

"Yes," observed Miss Seymour, "and most particularly pleasant for me. Charles is

the kindest brother in the world, always ready to enter into my feelings, and to assist me in my pursuits; but he is often absent, and even when at home, he has of course many occupations in which I cannot join. I cannot help often wishing I had a sister, or an intimate friend: this wish is at all times pretty strong, but it comes sadly upon me about the twelfth of August. I cannot get Charles to talk of anything then but dogs and guns, and he is sure to set off for Scotland on some shooting expedition, and to leave me alone, saying to myself a hundred times a day, ‘Oh for a sister who would not be always running away from me, and to whom the twelfth of August would be but as any other day.’”

“I can easily enter into your feelings,” said Florence; “how I should dislike to see Mary bustling away on the twelfth of August with a gun over her shoulder and whistling to her dogs! Poor Mary, she is looking quite pale at the very idea of killing a bird, she that never killed a midge in her life without begging its pardon.”

“Oh Florence! how can you run on in

this way,—Miss Seymour will think you quite foolish.”

“No, indeed, I delight in hearing you both speak. What a happy, happy party you seem altogether! You cannot think how much it strikes me; every one seems so interesting in a different way. What a dear little fellow your brother is, singing his little songs, and so droll and merry all day long; how fond your mamma seems of him; how fond indeed of you all! You might think it flattery, perhaps, were I to say all I think of her.”

“No, indeed, we should not!” exclaimed both the girls. “You can never say too much of dear mamma.”

“I can easily believe it; I do not think I ever saw a more angelic expression in any face; and her voice is so gentle and sweet, particularly when she addresses any of you, I cannot suppose she ever could be angry.”

“She never is!” exclaimed Florence, eagerly. “She never is angry, though sometimes she has cause to be so with me; but she only talks gravely to me when I am in the wrong, and seems so sorrowful, that it

goes to my very heart to displease her. But you do not say what you think of papa ; don't you like him also ?”

Miss Seymour hesitated : “ I think I should like Mr. Percy very much if I knew him well, but I am a little afraid of him : he has a very bright eye. I like its bright expression, and yet it frightens me ; I should be quite ashamed to say anything foolish before him.”

“ Oh ! indeed, you need not ; I talk a great deal of nonsense very often, and say out every thing I think, and he likes it : he is very droll himself ; he often makes us laugh so much. But there is another person you have not mentioned ; I am sure you cannot be afraid of him ; and if you do not praise him I shall be so sorry ; but it is impossible for any one, I should think, to see Mr. Maitland and not love him.”

“ You mean the blind old gentleman who sat next you at dinner. Oh, indeed, I do not wonder at your love for him, for he seems a most interesting person, so gentle and yet so lively and affectionate ; how very fond he seems of you all ! Is he nearly related to you ?”

Florence was about to answer, and to enter on a very favourite subject with her, namely, her first meeting with Mr. Maitland, when they were interrupted by Mr. Percy, who crossed over to where they were sitting, to announce to them that in ten minutes they would arrive at Dieppe.

All was now bustle and activity. It was about nine at night when they landed; the moon was shining bright as day; and the marked difference in the costume of the people, the high, stiff, white caps standing up like a fan, and the hanging lappets of the women, with their ornaments of gold for the neck, and long gold earrings, struck the girls most forcibly: they could no longer doubt they were indeed in France: where else could they have seen a man in a black velvet coat and cocked-hat driving pigs?

After a short detention at the custom-house they proceeded to the hotel, partook of an excellent supper, and, after a sound and refreshing sleep, they set out together for Rouen, as it was in that neighbourhood Mrs. Seymour had promised a visit to a friend.

The surrounding country looked gay and smiling, and the town itself, though the streets were narrow and crooked, and the houses built chiefly of wood, wore an air of opulence.

"It is but a dirty place," Florence exclaimed, as she picked her way through its narrow streets; "but still, I suppose, we must respect the birth-place of Corneille and Fontenelle."

Their ideas of Rouen rose considerably, however, on visiting its fine cathedral, the first they had seen in France; and they were much struck with the whole scene. The celebration of mass was going on as they entered. The priest, clad in white robes, stood on the steps of the altar scattering incense; clouds of smoke partly enveloped his figure; it was impossible not to think of Elijah, and to expect that the next moment they would see him no more. Within one of the sepulchres lay an image of our blessed Saviour, his body covered with flowers. A number of lights were burning before the tomb. A woman advanced, and began to renew some

of the lights which were nearly extinguished. Mary addressed a few words to her ; but she only shook her head, and exclaiming "*C'est notre bon Dieu !*" knelt down and began to pray.

"How impressive is this whole scene !" whispered Mary to her sister. "Look, Florence, at the group of children kneeling beside that old man with silver hair ; and, again, that dark-eyed Spanish-looking girl, with the air of a princess, mingling her prayers with the peasant by her side. I like this humility in the Catholics ; there is something fine in old and young, rich and poor, all prostrate together before the throne of God. How consoling is the idea of one common Father over all !" she continued, as her eyes filled with tears. "O that all would love and serve him without distinction of form or sect !"

On leaving the cathedral, they passed through the market-place, and saw the statue of Joan of Arc, who was so cruelly burnt at Rouen by the English.

"I hope," observed Mr. Maitland, as

they proceeded, "that you remember, Florence, what you read me lately of that sad story?"

"Yes, I think I do perfectly; and now that I have seen this statue, I am not much afraid I shall forget the maid of Orleans; I could only wish I could see a statue of every other historical character I ought to remember, I might then almost equal Mary."

"Has your sister a particularly good historical memory?"—inquired Miss Seymour.

"Has she! why Mary may be considered as the first historian of the age: she knows all the kings of England as well as they knew themselves, and some of them a great deal better. Have you never heard that she is strongly suspected of being the author of Hume's history? It was cruel of her to make it in such large thick volumes; I thought I never should have got through it."

"Oh Florence! Florence! how you do run on; what a wild girl you are, you never can be serious!"

"Serious, Mary! why I am sure Hume's history often made me serious enough! Do

you remember how grave I used to look, and how I used to take up the volume and feel its weight, and try to be grateful for such a mighty mass of information? To be sure I did sometimes glance at the dear octavo by its side, and dream for a moment of—

‘Caledonia stern and wild.

Meet nurse for a poetic child.’

But then you know there was the beauty of the poem and love for the author struggling in my breast. Who could have lived at Abbotsford and not have dreamt of it?”

“How! what! do you really mean to say that you have lived at Abbotsford? that you have seen Walter Scott?” exclaimed Miss Seymour.

“Seen him! we have lived with him, and listened to him with feelings which words can never paint; we have wandered with him by the banks of Yarrow, and sat with him in the *Rhymer’s Glen*, listening to the tales of other years. We have heard him talk of fairy elves and goblins grim, till we have almost fancied we saw the little creatures

sipping the dew-drop from the heather-bell, or heard the hoarse voice of the water-spirit in the pauses of the wind. O those were days never, never to be forgotten!—a spot of emerald green in the fair garden of our lives.” The colour deepened in Florence’s cheek, and mounted to her forehead, her eyes sparkled with animation; her whole appearance seemed changed. Miss Seymour looked at her in astonishment.

“Yes,” she continued, “his name is to us as a magic wand! awakening into life again the brightest scenes of past existence;—then those evenings of mysterious delight, when round the crackling fire we listened to his tales of wonder, fancying ‘a voice in every wind,’ and terrified to move, lest in our shadows we should see the fearful forms he had been describing.”

Miss Seymour had touched the master chord in Florence’s glowing imagination; but Mr. Maitland rose from the bench on which, under a spreading tree, they had seated themselves, and in a moment poetry, elves, fairies, sprites, all gave way to her eager wish to be of

service to him. She took his arm, and guiding him to the shady side of the road, they all advanced towards the hotel, to which Mr. and Mrs. Percy had already preceded them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE moment of separation arrived, and to those happy girls, new to life, and in all the brightness of hope and joy, it seemed a misfortune of no ordinary magnitude. Mary, with her eyes fixed on Emily Seymour, struggled with her emotion, her colour at one moment mounting to her forehead, and in the next fading to an alabaster hue; while her sister sat with her face buried in her hands, the tears trickling between her slender fingers. Suddenly looking up, she exclaimed, "This is wrong, quite wrong; it is our duty to bear this separation with fortitude. Yet it is very sad; it is not losing a mere acquaintance, it is parting with a dear friend,—yes, a dear friend; for have we not known

you, and loved you ever since that happy day, when you were little Emily, and papa brought you in his pocket from Worcester?"

Florence's sunny smile for a moment chased the tear from her cheek, but again sighing deeply, she continued, "I do feel so very very sorry, for we had so longed to meet a friend we could love! What can we do to lessen the bitterness of this separation? We could write to each other, could we not? But wanderers as we are both about to become, to what corner of this new world could we address our letters? No, that will not do. Let me consider."

She bent her head, and seemed lost in thought.

"We might write a journal," whispered Mary.

"A journal!" exclaimed Florence, brightening up, "it is an excellent idea,—it is the very best thing you could have thought of. Mary, in your own quiet way you have always something comforting to propose. How is it that I never thought of this? Yes, let each of us write a journal; let us detail every event, every thought, every feeling, and let us ex-

change our journals on that happy day when we shall meet again in green England, our own dear native land."

They parted with some tears, but many pleasing anticipations of a future day of joy, each determined not only to seek interesting events, but to find them; and to detail their adventures with a fidelity hitherto unequalled, and in language and brightness of colouring which would overwhelm all former journal writers with hopeless despair.

Mr. Percy proceeded with his family straight to Paris, and on the second evening after their arrival, Florence, faithful to her promise, seated herself at her beautiful writing-desk, which Mr. Maitland had given her before leaving England, and thus commenced the promised journal.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

"Paris, November 5.

"Florence to Emily,—how well it sounds! yet I fear it may not be the regular way of beginning a journal. Well, let it pass, I write to an indulgent friend. A *friend*!—how sweet

is the word,—how we have longed to possess a friend !—but I forget I am not writing a letter, but a journal;—a journal should be a history of events, not a detail of feelings, I believe : yet ours may be both, may it not ? It would suit me better, for I like to ramble. I hope, Emily, you do not care much for style, for I have none. I have written so very little—Mary and I have never been separated, though we did sometimes write to each other across the room, and send little Charles to ride express with our letters ; but again I am forgetting ; let me make a better pen, and begin in a regular manner.

“ We arrived at Paris in perfect safety ; and after papa had lodged us comfortably in this hotel, he proceeded to St. Cloud, to see a person there with whom he had business ; he was scarcely gone when some very fine people arrived, and the landlady, anxious to give them the best apartments, and seeking a pretext to make us give up our rooms, desired, in a very rude and uncivil way, to see our passports. We had none to show. We had been assured in London, that as the

Duke of Wellington and the allied troops were in Paris, a passport was not necessary; but she informed us that the police would be with us within half-an-hour, and if we could not produce one we must leave her house. She left the room, and we looked round at each other in dismay. What was to be done? Mr. Maitland proposed going immediately to the Duke of Wellington's to procure a passport; and as his going alone would have made us all very anxious, mamma allowed me to accompany him. A carriage was sent for, and to the Duke of Wellington's we accordingly went. As we passed from one magnificent apartment to another, I felt sadly frightened; and by the time we were introduced to the secretary, I seemed to have forgotten both French and English; but Mr. Maitland told our story beautifully. We obtained our passport, and returned home with recovered spirits. We had scarce time to relate our adventures to those we had left behind, when my Lady Fury entered, smiling triumphantly, and followed by the officer of police. We felt certain she had sent for him,

and we did enjoy extremely being able to put the magnificent passport into his hands. Rage, disappointment, and a most frightful French cap, made her look truly hideous; but the Duke of Wellington's powerful name was not to be questioned; the officer bowed and left the room; our hostess also disappeared in silent indignation, shutting the door after her with a clap like thunder. So ended our first adventure in Paris. We soon after went to bed, and slept thirteen hours to recover it. Strengthened and invigorated, we went this morning to see the Louvre, and were almost wild with delight. It would be quite foolish in me to attempt a description of it—I cannot; but to think that Mary and I have now seen Titian's Martyrdom of St. Peter, the Communion of St. Jerome by Domenichino, the Apollo, the Venus de Medicis, the Laocoon, &c.,—it seems like a fairy dream. Our enchantment would have been complete, could Mr. Maitland have participated in our delight: he repeatedly assured us, that listening to our remarks was the greatest enjoyment to him; but, alas!

his dear, sightless eyes. Oh Emily, did you know him as we do, how you would love him !”

“ November 6.

“ This has been another happy day. Immediately after breakfast we went to the Tuileries, and addressing one of the officers, we supposed, in waiting, inquired at what hour the king went to mass ; he most civilly offered to conduct us to the great hall, where we should see him pass ; here he procured us seats, and told us the names of all the principal men in the room. We saw the king’s body guard, all of whom are gentlemen of distinction. Nothing could exceed the politeness of this officer ; fearing the crowd might incommode us, he accompanied us himself to the chapel, procured us seats near the royal pew, and then left us to take his station on the king’s left hand, by the side of the Duc d’Angoulême. The Duchess d’Angoulême sat on the right hand of the king. She still retains, in a great degree, the English mode of dressing, and even this

slight circumstance gave her additional interest in our eyes, for did it not seem to say she remembered with gratitude a country which had sheltered her from the storm, and where, even amidst the enemies of her native land, she had found all the kindnesses and charities of home. I am not sure that *kindnesses* is a proper word, but in a journal may I not sometimes make a word—may I not also sometimes use a Scotch one? You are aware, I believe, that it was in Scotland we met with nurse, who has proved such a treasure, and Mary and I have profited very considerably, I can assure you, by her instructions; so prepare sometimes to be puzzled. But how have I wandered from the courts of France to the wilds of Scotland; and how shall I return again with proper dignity?

“The music in the chapel was extremely fine, and the royal party seemed deeply impressed with devotional feelings; what but a deep sense of religion could have sustained them in all they have suffered! It was delightful to see them again restored to all

their ancient honours, and to hear the shout of '*Vive le Roi!*' as the king passed through the entrance-hall. How like a dream is this rapid and happy change! After mass the officer again joined us, and after leading us through one of the beautiful saloons, magnificently fitted up with paintings and Gobelin tapestry, offered to conduct us to the Louvre, where we wished to proceed. We would have declined giving him this trouble, but giving mamma his arm, and pushing through the crowd in the first hall, he landed us in safety amongst the ancient paintings, offering, at the same time, if we would return next day, to show us the whole palace. This proposal, fearful of intruding on his time, mamma declined. But the evening is closing in upon us with the most elevated ideas of French politeness. After leaving the Louvre we took a long walk, and were alternately pleased and disappointed. The gardens of the Tuileries did not quite come up to our expectations, but we were amused by the troops of gaily-dressed people, whom we saw spending their day out of doors, in what papa

called ‘strenuous idleness,’ their children playing around them, and they themselves seated on cane chairs, which we were told were hired by the day for so many *sous* a-piece; there they sat looking quite pleased with their exertions, giving the little ones every now and then, a roasted chestnut, or a sip of lemonade. I fear Miss Hannah More would have looked rather grave at such a mode of education. With many of the public buildings we were much struck; la Place Louis XV. is very fine, and deeply interesting, from the remembrance of the dreadful tragedy acted there. It is to be hoped the poor Duchess d’Angoulême is now able to view it with less acute feelings than ours this morning; if not, she is exposed to a perpetual martyrdom. But we saw it for the first time—to-morrow we might view it with more composure. Emily, is it not mysterious, the effect of time upon the human heart, even while memory and the power to feel remain the same? I am thinking a great deal more on this subject, but have got into a bewilderment, and cannot express my feelings. My

ideas seemed to be packed up with my clothes—only a few words are lying about, and they are not the right ones. So good night, dear friend.”

I have thus given a specimen of the commencement of Florence's journal, and shall in future resort to it at such times as I think it may prove interesting to my young readers. After remaining some days in Paris, Mr. Percy proceeded with his family towards the south of France, and on reaching Nevers, Florence wrote as follows in her diary.

CHAPTER IX.

“ Nevers, November 13.

“I HAVE not written for some days ; indeed I have had little to describe ; the country since leaving Fontainebleau has been uniformly flat and uninteresting, and the inns rather dirty and uncomfortable. This morning, after breakfast, we went to see a convent. One of the sisters conducted us over the building—it formed a square, the ground in the interior being laid out as a flower garden, and the cloisters ornamented with pots of roses and carnations : there was an air of quiet repose over the whole scene, which inspired us with feelings of respect and awe. Above the door of the chapel we saw the following inscription :—‘ *Ah que ce Maison est terrible,*

c'est la Maison de Dieu, et la porte du Ciel'

On entering, our conductress, after sprinkling herself with holy water, knelt down and became absorbed in her devotions. Several of the sisters were kneeling in prayer, and no sound broke the stillness around, save the occasional light footsteps of a nun as she left the chapel. Our attention was particularly attracted by the youthful figure and pensive attitude of one of those kneeling figures; no look or motion betrayed a consciousness of our presence. She slowly rose from her knees, and discovered to us a countenance of extreme loveliness, and in the bloom of youth, yet the traces of care were on her brow, and we fancied we could read a mournful history in her mild blue eyes. We left the chapel saddened by this idea, and the figure of this nun still haunts my imagination.

“ We have met here a lady who has just arrived from Montpellier; she gives such an account of the cold winds which prevail there in winter, that papa has determined to proceed to Aix, or perhaps to the neighbourhood of Marseilles. This town appeared to us large when seen from the bridge, but

there is no beauty in the interior ; the streets are narrow and far from clean, and without foot pavement, and the houses have an appearance of antiquity, but they are not old enough to be picturesque, or new enough to look comfortable."

" Arnas, November 19.

" To-day deserves to be commemorated, for to-day we came in sight of the hills. Oh Emily, how our hearts bounded when we saw their blue heads. We were often obliged to walk, for our horses did not enjoy the hills as much as we did ; but we went merrily along, singing the songs of our own native land, for there was the clear stream, the wooded heights, the bright and blessed sun, and for the moment we fancied ourselves at Malvern again—dear, dear Malvern. You may imagine how striking must have been the resemblance, when little Charles, who kept bounding on before, suddenly ran back to us, exclaiming, ‘ Me so happy, me going to see old Thomas, and Norris, and the donkey, and big birdy, and all my friends.’ Our little Charlie is improving rapidly in his English

since we set out on our journey. I fear he will soon speak only too well—I shall be asking his assistance by-and-bye. But to return to the lovely valley of Tarare, which is more beautiful than any other part of France we have yet seen. The little town lies sheltered in the bosom of the hills, looking most inviting; and as we drove by the side of flowery fields, and looked upon the clear stream, I thought how beautiful in description it would appear to you, but the flowers seem to have faded, the stream has glided from my memory, and here I am with a bad pen and a broken table, quite unable to impart to you the admiration we experienced.

“ Our weather has been very favourable—extremely mild during the day—though sometimes inclining to frost in the mornings; the trees are still in full leaf. We find this way of travelling with a voiturier rather tedious; we often take ten or twelve hours to a day’s journey of twenty or thirty miles: but while resting at the inns we go on with our studies with Mr. Maitland, and the time never appears long to us.

"I have said nothing of the towns we have passed through within these last few days : indeed, Emily, I get on but indifferently with this journal ; I don't know how those journal writers manage who are always clever and never sleepy, and who write on regularly with or without materials. I am quite the contrary of all this, feeling at night particularly *unclever*, and always sleepy—one unvaried object coming constantly between me and the paper at this hour—I see it now in a corner of the room, with its white drapery floating around ; it is looking most attractive, so I will say good night."

" Lyons, November 21.

" We arrived here yesterday morning. The situation of the town is beautiful, standing at the confluence of the Soane and the Rhone : a fine ridge of hills rises behind the city, innumerable villas are scattered up and down the heights, amidst luxuriant wood, and refreshing verdure ; and the picturesque little villages which peep out from the surrounding valleys, give it the appearance of a romantic yet populous neighbourhood. We were not

able to see much of the town, but in passing through the principal streets had a good view of the public buildings, many of which are fine. The houses in general have rather a ruinous look, and the streets are not good; but there is an appearance of wealth and commerce about the town, and immense wagons, which we concluded must be loaded with silks and velvets, threatened to crush us to death at every step: we were wonderfully supported at the moment, by the expectation of the silk pelisses mamma had promised to purchase for us, but on going to the shops were disappointed to find everything dearer here than in Paris."

" Avignon, November 26.

" We are just returned from visiting the ruins of the church of the Cordeliers, and the grave of Petrarch's Laura. There are now few traces of a church to be seen; part of the ground on which it stood is laid out as a flower garden, through which runs the celebrated stream of Vaucluse. An old French gentleman, the owner of the garden, pointed out to us the spot under which lay the tomb

of Laura: he assured us it was still entire underneath, but though he endeavoured to speak with enthusiasm on the subject, and clasped his hands, and made most frightful faces, he could scarcely answer a single question papa put to him. The ground around was covered with weeds, and he had contented himself with merely planting a cypress tree to mark the spot where Laura lay: Mary and I carried away a little branch as a memorial.

“We are much disappointed at leaving Avignon without visiting the fountain of Vaucluse, but the weather will not permit of it; we have had a great deal of rain lately: the streets here look rather gloomy and deserted, but there seem to be many good houses, and it is the cleanest town we have yet seen. We are sorry to find that the language of the people is now becoming almost unintelligible to us; it seems a patois of the most puzzling nature, for the very words are changed; we heard a man ask our landlord yesterday for a ‘*petit morcel du bosse*,’ (*petit morceau du bois*.) Should this continue it will deprive us of a great source of amusement, for we have found much interest in

talking to the peasants as we travel along. Our landlord here tells us that the people in the south are all anxious for a continuance of peace, but this does not seem to be the general feeling. We met yesterday a small party, of five or six soldiers, returning to their homes: each had lost either an arm or a leg, yet they all agreed they never would have wished for peace, but would willingly try to fight still, even in their wounded condition; they looked as like ruffians as possible, and we should not at all have liked to have met them with all their legs and arms. I must now lay aside my writing, as papa wishes us to walk out with him again. We leave this to-morrow morning at six."

Our travellers did not so immediately proceed on their journey; a heavy storm of wind and rain determined Mr. Percy to remain another day at Avignon; and the girls having spent a great part of the morning in reading aloud to Mr. Maitland, entreated him to tell them, while they sat at work, some of his interesting Scottish anecdotes. "O do, dear Sir," they both exclaimed, "for nothing in-

terests us so much as to hear of anything connected with Scotland."

"You know," continued Florence, "we have ourselves a *wee* drop of Scottish blood in our veins; we have a Scotch cousin, have we not, papa?"

"And me has a Scotch nurse," exclaimed the little Charles, who sat in a corner of the room, turning over the leaves of a book of pictures. "Me has a Scotch nurse, and she calls my little finger a *perlie*. Nurse a very funny woman," he continued, running up to Mr. Maitland, and scrambling up upon his knee.

"Don't interrupt Mr. Maitland, dear boy," said Florence, "he is thinking of a Scotch story to tell us."

"A story; me so glad: me like a story."

"My dear little boy," said Mary, "I fear it will not be a story which you can understand."

"Then me no glad; but me sing you a song, Minny, and you make me 'stand."

"Understand, you should say, my little man; but hush, for I am sure, from Mr. Maitland's face, he has remembered something interesting to tell us."

“ I am not sure of that, Mary,” Mr. Maitland answered ; “ but I have a manuscript amongst my papers, which I think John could easily find. Were your papa to read it to you it might, perhaps, prove interesting.* It is a true little history, which happened in a village belonging to a much-loved friend of mine, and I was myself acquainted with all the parties concerned.”

The manuscript was quickly found, and, seating themselves around the table, Mr. Percy read the following story.

* The end of the story alone is altered.

CHAPTER X.

WILLIAM AND MARY.

For aught that ever I could read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth.
SHAKESPEARE.

“O MARY ! Mary ! little did I think I wad
hae lived to have seen this day ; but I canna
bear it langer and I winna, the winter’s snaw
is na colder than you are now to me ; but
mony a simmer’s sun and winter’s frost will
ye hae to th’ole, or ere you see my face
again.”

“A weel, William ! it’s no the first time ye
hae been speaking to me o’ this lang journey,
but for a’ that, I trow it will na prove so unco

lang, the morn's night will see the end of it. Afore eight o'clock at night ye'll be back again, lad ; sair travelled, nae doubt, and unco weary, but wi' nae new tale to tell, for all your travel, and I am weary o' the auld one, man."

" Then, Mary, it's the last time ye'll hae to listen to it : nae doubt Jamie will tell you a newer and a brawer tale, but see an it will be as true a one ; nae doubt, too, he has got mair of this world's gear, but see and he does na ken how to keep it. All that I had would hae been yours, Mary ; late and early would I hae toiled for you and thought it pleasure ; but I am no the lad to gie a leal heart for a changed fancy. I hae loved you lang and faithfully ; frae the bit lassie to the woman grown, you hae been my thought night and morning. There's your linty, puir thing, singing its last sang for me, and there stands the hawthorn tree, where I herried the bonny wee thing to gie you pleasure ; mony's the tale ye hae telt me under that green tree, that I hae believed ower truly ; but mony a bird will build among its branches, and mony a simmer's sun will whiten its bonny blossoms, ere words as true will be telt you there, as

those you hae sae sair misdoubted. I am ganging awa, Mary,"—and he grasped her hand with strong emotion—"I am ganging awa,—hae you naething mair to say to me?" and he stood irresolute.

One word, one little word, and the past would have been as nothing; again would she have been all the world to him; but pride was struggling in her bosom: that word was unsaid, and with a look of anguish which long haunted Mary's sleepless pillow, he left the cottage. That last lingering look even at the moment struck a cold chill upon her heart.

"It's no possible he can be in earnest," she whispered to herself; and rising hastily her hand was on the latch. "Na! na!" she continued, "I must na call him back, or I'll spoil him all thegether; he kens fu' weel I care nae for Jamie, and it's no the face he thinks sae bonny, and the een he has sae often telt me glance like ony diamonds that he has taen his last look o'! Na! na! he'll be here again the morn's night, that's past all doubt, sae I'll think nae mair about it. And yet, and yet," she murmured, "but this

is nonsense, I'll think nae mair about it, that's my perfect determination;"—and the wheel was turned more and more swiftly, but Mary's work that evening proved a mingled yarn.

William, meanwhile, pursued his cheerless way; but as a turn of the road was about to shut out the cottage of Hillside from his view, he paused to look once more on the scene of his past happiness. It was situated on a soft green slope, at the foot of the Pentland hills, and he could still discern its little garden, gay with many flowers, which he himself had planted, and the roses and honeysuckles which Mary and he had trained together on its white-washed walls; but the green turf-seat, his favourite resting-place, was deserted, and as he thought who next might fill his place there by Mary's side, a cold shudder ran through his veins, and shutting his eyes for a moment as if to extinguish all remembrance of the past, he hastily turned and pursued his homeward course. But how shut out the memory of the past, when the all lovely present was in each surrounding object, as the countenance of a friend? The

sun was setting gloriously in the heavens, a quickly-passing shower had left him sole master of a cloudless sky, his red beams fell upon the hills, giving to the alternate spots of purple heath and soft green verdure ten thousand various hues of lovely light; the woods still wore the fresh green livery of spring; the birch trees were giving to the air their rich perfume, and birds innumerable were singing in the branches. As he approached his home, still dearer sounds came floating on the breeze, the clear sweet notes of his youthful brother mingling with the deep solemn tones of his father's voice. It was the hour of family worship; he paused upon the threshold as the last verse of the forty-sixth paraphrase was given out:—

“ 'Mong pastures green he'll lead his flock,
Where living steams appear,
And God the Lord from every eye
Shall wipe off every tear.”

The song ceased, and softly entering, he was the next moment kneeling by his father's side; fervently did he pray that a God of peace and hope might indeed abide within that dwelling, and wipe away those tears which

so soon would flow for its unhappy son; but to a sense of that entire resignation to the Divine will, that spirit which can say in the true acceptation of the words,—“Thy will be done,” he was as yet a stranger. Family worship being ended, and the Holy Bible placed with reverence on the shelf, the old man turned on his son a look more in sorrow than in anger.

“William,” he said, “you hae been gaeing baith your gude mother and myself muckle vexation o’ late; it’s no decent, it’s no mannerly even to an earthly master to be stealing into the house ‘like a thief in the night lurking in secret places,’ instead o’ sitting down wi’ boldness to sing the praises o’ the King o’ kings. There are images, William, o’ wood and stane, o’ silver and o’ gold, but there are images too o’ flesh and blood, and all such we are forbid to worship. My son, ye are setting up an idol in your heart, see that it does nae deceive ye.”

“Heth ! heth ! gude man,” said the gude wife, “and do ye really think that it is a wheen feckless words like these that will make ony compression on a mind clean gaen into

captivity like his, and sae sair benighted wi' the glamour o' the twa black een o' a silly lassie? Na! na! it's no the wisdom o' Solomon that will make a compression, when he winna listen to me, his gude mother, and ane too that's had sae muckle experience in the matters: hae nae I been, (no to say,) ilka day, but ilka hour in the day, rating on him extraordinair; have nae I telt him that he is war than the prodigal in the scriptures? Prodigal o' the siller he ne'er will hae, he canna weel be, but is nae he prodigal o' the precious time that might hae gotten him the siller? Hae nae I telt him how different it was wi' you and me when we were courting? when did ye sit hour after hour looking in my face, and cracking about my bonny een, and telling me the self-same story, ower and ower again, for it's no possible there can be ony variety in sic constant converse? Na! na! we would hae thought shame to hae wasted even one o' our precious hours o' manfu labour for sic silly nonsense; a wee gliff on the Saturday nights served fu' weel for ye to say your say to me, and yet whare was there ever a man mair clean demented wi'

love for any woman than ye were for me, gude man ?”

William smiled even amidst his bitter feelings, as he contrasted the high cheek-bones and weather-beaten features of his step-mother with the blooming beautiful countenance of his youthful Mary; but unable to trust his voice, he slowly retired into the inner apartment of the cottage, placing his hand for a moment as he passed on the head of his little brother, and silently invoking a blessing upon him.

The night seemed to pass only too swiftly, though sleep visited not his eye-lids. With the first rays of the sun he arose, and dressing himself quickly, he began to collect his slender wardrobe; his eye fell on a handkerchief which Mary had marked for him with his name: his first impulse was to thrust it from him, but the next moment, with a burst of tenderness which he strove in vain to banish, he snatched it up and hid it in his bosom, and tying his clothes into a bundle, which he slung on his shoulder, prepared to leave his home and become a wanderer. Passing into the outer apartment, he paused for a moment

by his father's bedside; the old man seemed in a troubled sleep, his withered hand lay across his bed, his white hair partly shading a brow on which age had made deep furrows.

"A prodigal! no, gude wife, no!" murmured the old man. "O dinna vex him: my son, listen——"

William dropped upon his knees, he gently seized his father's hand, while his tears fell fast upon it. "Bless me! bless me, O my father!"

The old man half opened his eyes, and William, starting up, hastily darted from the cottage.

All nature seemed alive with the spirit of the morning, the mist was rolling away in deep masses from the green hill side, the flocks and herds were cropping the dewy herbage, the birds were rejoicing in a new day, and the little burn flowed glancing and dimpling in the sunbeams. He halted for a moment as he crossed the stream to bathe his feverish brow in its cool waters; a few half-withered primroses lay upon the bank, which Mary had flung from her the day before while talking with him. His first impulse was to treasure

them in his bosom, his next to dash them into the stream.

“O that its waters could so wash from my memory the remembrance of the past!” he exclaimed, and hastily getting up, he crossed the country, and took his way towards the sea.

Meanwhile the inhabitants of the cottage rose at their accustomed hour to pursue the cheerful labours of the day, all unconscious of the sorrow which awaited them. That William was absent at breakfast, and even at the dinner hour, was matter more of sorrow than surprise, for such absences had been too frequent of late, but when the hour of family worship arrived, when the prayer began, was ended, and still no William came, the old man felt uneasy.

“Gude wife,” he said, “it’s a fine night, and a bonny clear moon rising, I’ll e’en take my staff in my hand, and step my ways up to Hillside, and speak to them when they’re baith thegither. O this reckless way of ganging on! they hae naething laid to the fore to be sure, and it’s no muckle I hae to help them wi’, but some sma’ thing I can

afford them, and they had better marry out o' hand, and trust to God's blessing on their usefu' labour, than to be wasting days and nights in sic an unprofitable manner. She's a bonny lassie, Mary, and a gude lassie; what would hinder us {to take them baith in and gi' them house-room for a season?"

"My certie, gude man, and ye are no blate to be making ony sic proposition; it's neither her gudeness, nor her beauty, I trow, that will make anither room in our house, and we hae scant eneugh o' commodation as it is; so tak my word for it, I will gie my consent to nae sic interlouping on a wife's prerogative. The day your bonny Mary walks into this house, I'se just walk out o' it, that's my perfect 'termination: hear ye that, gude man?"

But the gude man heard her not; aware of the rising storm, he was already on his way towards Hillside. The cool night air he felt reviving to his spirits, which during the day had been at times unusually depressed, and by the light of a clear full moon, he passed briskly on. As he approached the cottage,

his eye was immediately directed to the green turf seat in the little garden, where the lovers were usually to be found: it was not empty, but Mary sat there alone, her head bent down, and resting on her hands. At the sound of footsteps she looked up.

“William!” she exclaimed; then seeing the old man, she added, in a voice of forced calmness, “I thought it had been William; but I fancy he is ower muckle ta’en up wi’ ither things to speer after me the day.”

“Ta’en up wi’ ither things! Gude preserve us, Mary! Has he no been wi’ you? it’s neither his gude mother nor mysel’ that has seen a sight o’ him since the last night. I came here to seek him.”

“No seen him! no seen William since the last night!” exclaimed the poor girl, almost sinking to the ground, and becoming deadly pale. “Then it’s ower true what he telt me; he is gone—lost to me for ever! O that my pridefu’ heart and silly tongue should hae worked for me sic a work o’ misery! My William! my own William! he is lost to me for ever!”

The old man stood bewildered. "Mary," he said, "ye're surely no yoursel:' what's that ye are saying?"

But when Mary detailed to him the quarrel, and all that had passed between them at their last meeting, his misery almost equalled her's ; but from his meek spirit the broken-hearted girl had no reproach to bear, and after remaining with her some time, and vainly attempting to inspire her with that confidence in William's return, which he himself scarcely felt, he took his way in sorrow and perplexity towards home. Unconsciously to himself, the hope of finding his son there, had sustained him, for as he entered and his eye fell on William's vacant seat, his heart sank within him, and he awoke to the full sense of his loss.

"O heavenly Father !" he exclaimed, "what is this that has come upon me? help me in my misery; hear my prayer; send back my wanderer. Let not my son be the means of bringing my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave! Yes, Jenny, it is ower true, he is gone: William has left us—left his puir auld father! Oh! I hae had an unearthly

warning o' this creeping ower me for days and weeks—I hae seen him constantly before me in the watches o' the night. It was but yestreen that he stood by my bed, wi' a face o' grief,—‘Bless me!’ he said, ‘bless me, my father!’ and when I opened my mouth to bless him he was gone—gone—vanished from my sight, and these puir withered arms were grasping the empty air. Oh, Jenny, let us take the *Book*! let us humble ourselves before the Most High! let us turn unto Him, ‘who is a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.’ He is infinite in wisdom, and almighty in power; he has wounded and he can heal. Mourning may endure for a night, but joy may come in the morning.”

But the morning arose, and brought no joy to the bereaved parent. Weeks and months passed on, and still no tidings came, yet daily did he implore a God of mercy to watch over his unhappy son, and hope still lingered in the father’s breast, even when reason itself seemed to say it was in vain.

It had long been Mary’s custom each

market-day, to stop as she passed along at the cottage-door, and if, amidst the gude wife's desultory communications, William's name was mentioned, the rest of her little journey seemed all the shorter; but at first, after William's disappearance, her accustomed road seemed to her as forbidden ground, and crossing along the bottom of the field, she would, with eager eyes, gaze upon the much-loved spot, till distance hid the cottage from her view. Encouraged, however, by a few cheering words from the kind old man, she had again renewed her now melancholy visits. "And is there nae word o' Willy yet?" was the constant question asked each morning with trembling hope.

But even the doubtful blessing of uncertainty she was doomed to lose. One day a pedlar, who was in the custom of making an annual round of the country, called at the cottage to show a paragraph, which he had cut out of an English newspaper, stating that a countryman, supposed to be from Scotland, had been found murdered in a ditch near London, and that his neckcloth was marked with the initials, "W. M." This circumstance, and

the description given, left not a doubt of his misfortune in the mind of the unhappy father, and his daily prayer was no longer for his son's return, but that his murderers might be forgiven.

Six long years passed away, and the name of William was rarely mentioned ; yet not the less did his image dwell in his father's remembrance, and in the heart of that pale, sad girl, whose youthful bloom was gone, and whose heart was breaking.

One sultry evening, as the old man was reclining in his easy chair, fatigued with the labours of the day, a letter was brought him, and on opening it he read the following words :—

“ My dear Father—If you are still in the body, I am the happiest man alive ; if not, it's naething mair than naturality might expect ; the prodigal is about to return to his father's house ; but I will neither say where I hae been, nor where I am, but you will soon see again your dutiful and loving son,

“ WILLIAM MUIR.

“ P. S. I am no married yet, or likely to be.”

“My son ! my son !” exclaimed the old man ; “my Willy ! and does he live, and have I read the blessed words, and shall I see my Willy again—shall my old eyes behold him—shall my lips bless him ? Oh, my God ! I thank thee—thou hast done all things well—‘Thou afflictest, but it is in measure.’ And shall I see him once more, my Willy—my lost one ? O Jenny, why do you no greet ? for I canna, and yet my auld heart is breaking, but it is wi’ joy now. Geordie, my wee man, take the foal—take Missey, but dinna ride the puir beast ower fast, for ye ken she is auld now, but ride off wi’ speed, and first ye’ll tell Mary, and then ye’ll tell your brothers and your sisters, and their gude men and their gude wives, and the bairns too, and tell them to come all here the morn, and they shall hear the letter read—his own blessed words they shall hear.”

The morrow came, and the sun’s bright beams never shone on a sweeter sight, than the old man presented, like a patriarch, surrounded by his children, and his children’s children. The house could not contain them all, and some were seated outside upon the

grass. The letter was read first within doors, and then without. The men shouted for joy, the women wept, the children clapped their little hands, rejoicing.

“Dinna greet, bonny Mary,” said a little curly-headed, blue-eyed boy—(and Mary’s especial favourite)—“dinna greet, uncle Willy’s no dead, he is coming back to marry you; father telt me that this very morning.”

“Heaven bless you, my wee Willy!” exclaimed the weeping girl—“Heaven bless your dear face! Come and sit upon my knee, and be my wee king, my wee prophet king;” and she hid her face on his shoulder, and covered his neck with kisses.

But the returning roses in Mary’s cheek bloomed and withered again, as the summer seemed to be passing away, and her lover was still absent. Towards autumn another letter from William was received; it mentioned that he was far advanced on his way, and that by the next day he hoped to reach his father’s dwelling; but alas! it bade them prepare for disappointment. From the scorching sun of St. Vincent’s, and from the perils of the deep, he had returned unharmed; but on his arrival

in England, (exposure in a night of soaking rain,) to which his impatience to reach home had exposed him, brought on an illness which had ended in inflammation of the lungs, and for several weeks he had lain in an hospital in London, with but little or no hope of ultimate recovery. Considerable amendment had however taken place, and he wrote cheerily. "I am better again," he said, "greatly better; it wants but the sight of you all—of you, my dear old father, and of one whom I darena name—to make me feel well again; a drink out of our ain clear burn will cure this thirst, which is now my chief complaint, and I shall no longer feel the want of breath when wandering once more among the Pentland Hills."

In all this there was but doubtful comfort, and the old man felt afraid to give way to joy: but constantly habituated to lay before a throne of grace every anxious care, he, after a fervent prayer for resignation to the divine will in all things, sank into quiet repose. Next morning he dressed himself in his Sunday's clothes, and opening wide the casement of the little window, he seated himself close

to it, that he might catch every passing sound. The air was clear and still, the sun shone out brightly—it was a lovely morning. For some hours no sound met his listening ear, save the bleating of the sheep from the hill side, the low sweet song of the robin, and the cheerful voices of happy children from the neighbouring village. Restless and unhappy, he opened his Bible, which lay before him, and inwardly raising his thoughts to heaven, he fervently prayed to be enabled to cast all his burden on the Lord, who hath promised rest unto his faithful servants. “O my heavenly Father,” he exclaimed, “I am but a bruised reed, but thou wilt not break me; I am but a smoking flax, but thou wilt not quench what thy grace hath kindled; the Lord redeemeth the souls of his servants, and none of them that trust in thee shall be desolate: do what thou wilt, yet shall I sing of thy righteousness, for thou only art good; therefore shall I praise thy name, for thou alone art great.” Strengthened and calmed in spirit, he soon became absorbed in the blessed volume; suddenly a deep shadow fell upon the page, and looking up he saw Mary’s

blushing countenance at the little casement.

“Father,” she said, (an appellation she always gave the old man,) “father, I canna rest; I ken it’s no right to be the first to seek him, and I have tried to settle to my wheel, but it winna do;” and with a deepened blush she added, “I ha’e tried to read my Bible too, but ’deed I canna make it out. O father, but he’s lang, lang o’ casting up; surely, surely there’s some sair mischance come ower him; there’s something at my heart tells me I shall ne’er see my Willy again.”

“O Mary, dinna speak sic words as these, dinna take from me that composure o’ mind I hae found here; is he no in the care o’ a heavenly Father? has he no been a Father to him in that far distant land—has he no saved him from the perils o’ the deep, and raised him from the bed o’ death? Without his permission, not a hair of his head shall perish—without his leave, not a sparrow falls to the ground; and is not he of more value than many sparrows? My bairn, let us humble ourselves before our God, and trust all to his care.”

In such talk many hours passed away; but as it drew towards evening the anxiety of both rose to a painful height.

“Father!” exclaimed Mary, “what is that I see? Look, look to that cloud o’ dust—look to that horseman—can it be William? O look, look—tell me—speak to me!”

“Ye are right, my bairn, it’s his very sel’—it’s William—it’s my son! Gie me your arm, Mary; take me to the door, my auld limbs are failing me all thegither now. O God, support me—spare me to bless him once more!” and leaning on her arm he with difficulty reached the threshold.

The horseman approached, and with a “Good evening to you, old friend,” passed the cottage with increased speed, and was out of sight in a moment. The old man’s heart sank within him, and scarcely could the trembling girl support him again to the seat he had just quitted. Sinking into his arm-chair, he exclaimed, “Mary, I am no able for this, it will kill me all thegither.” But Mary’s eyes were again fixed on some distant object, and she held her breath to listen.

“Hear ye that, father? hear ye that? it’s the rumbling o’ a cart I hear, and I see it—I see it plainly; and there’s somebody in it, but they are lying down. O wae’s my heart, can that be William?”

But when suspense at length was terminated—when the cart approached, and actually stopped before the door of the cottage, neither the old man nor the trembling girl could move from the spot on which they stood; and it was, supported by his step-mother, that the poor invalid entered his father’s dwelling, and fell upon his father’s breast. Who can describe the scene which followed, heightened as it was by years of sorrow, and hours of anxious hope?

“Na,” as the gude wife said when talking over it with one of her neighbours the next day—“Na, na, it’s no in the power o’ possibility to gie you the circumstantialities o’ sic a tale. We all heard the rumbling o’ the cart—the good man heard it too, though he is rather dull o’ hearing now; but do ye think that either he or the silly lassie could move yae fut to gie a proper welcome to the puir wanderer—there they baith stood, he

like an image o' stucco wark, and she like an aspen leaf; but out I flew like ony bird, wi' all civility. 'William Muir,' I cried, 'as sure as I am in the body! but speak to me, man, is it yoursel', or is it your ghaist? for oh man, but you're sair, sair changed!' and wi' that I helped him into the house to his auld father and the lassie;—and oh, but it was a deep scene!"

William was indeed sadly changed; yet there was a clearness in his eye, and a colour in his cheek, which at first deceived his anxious friends; and to Mary's daily question each morning, "How is he the day, gude wife?" the answer generally was, "Better, my lassie, greatly better; keep ye up your heart, for ere long he will be a blythe bridegroom." But on the fifth morning after his arrival, the answer to her anxious inquiry was less propitious. "No so weel the day, Mary, 'deed he is no so weel, howsomever I impeach the herring for that; he wad hae a salt herring to his supper yestreen."

But Mary saw in his altered looks a deeper cause; it soon became evident to all, that his apparent amendment had been but the ex-

citement of the moment, and that he was now losing ground daily; he seemed, at times, himself to think his case hopeless, and evidently wished to prepare her mind for their eternal separation.

“ Mary,” he said, one evening, while they were seated together on the green turf seat in the cottage garden; “ Mary, I feel now that I shall never be married but to my grave; but dinna be sae sair cast down, the time was when I could na hae thought o’ this mysel’ without an awfu’ sinking o’ the heart; but the weeks I spent in the hospital was a blessed time to me. I was weak, weak in body when I entered there, and weaker still in mind, but it was there these long-neglected words o’ my dear old father fell like the dew of the morning on my withered heart—‘Cling to the book o’ life, my son—it is in it you will find that there is balm in Gilead, and a cure for every woe;’ and I did find in that blessed book a balm and a joy, which in my day of health and strength I had never known. O the peaceful sweet comfort it was to my poor tossed, restless mind, to find that there was One who had done for me what I never, never

could have done for myself—had taken all my sins upon himself, and had died, that you and I, and all that put their trust in him, might live for ever. The darkness o' midnight seemed to clear away from my senseless mind, and words that to me before had nae meaning, seemed written wi' a sunbeam o' heavenly love; often did they make my heart like to break, but yet they were joyful words to me, for they spoke of the peace, and joy, and hope of believing; they told that all to me was sent in mercy, that God often put his own children into the furnace of affliction to purify them, and make them more worthy of his love; that to me the Sun of Righteousness would arise with healing on his wings, and for me a day would dawn when those light afflictions would seem as a moment, in comparison of the glory which would be revealed. Yes, Mary, Jesus is now my safety, my Saviour, my hope in life, my happiness in death. O Spirit of the Father and of the Son," he exclaimed, raising his tearful eyes to heaven, "be thou with me in my trying hour, and when the bread and the waters of this life can no longer sustain my

dying body, feed me with that bread which perisheth not, lead me beside fountains of living waters; so shall my eyes close in peace and hope in a world of sense, and open again in joyful adoration in a world of spirits."

Mary's sobs were hushed—her mind was awed and elevated; and such words never failed at the moment to diffuse a spirit of holy calm over the heart of the poor girl: but in the solitude of her home she thought with anguish of him so fondly loved—so lately found, and now about to be separated from her for ever; and with increased misery, she confessed that resignation was still a stranger to her bosom. But it was not in the ears of Him who wept those tears of more than mortal sorrow over the grave of Lazarus, that her humble prayer for forgiveness would be unavailing. There were times when the invalid himself seemed to feel as if recovery were not impossible, and would talk to her of the happiness they would enjoy together, were God yet to raise him up, and of the life of piety and usefulness, it would be his earnest wish and prayer that he might be enabled to lead. But appearances did not

seem to justify such hopes; his strength sank rapidly, and for the increased fever which was consuming him, there seemed some hidden cause, which was hurrying him to his grave.

His bustling step-mother evidently thought his summons was at hand. "William," she said, one bright morning; "William, I am judging you hae but brief space to bide amang us now, ye ken it's the Lord's will, and he maun ken best; we hae naething to say against that, as I often tell the gude man; but I hae been striving extraordiner to get all things ready for ye, and clean and comfortable ye shall lie; and there's a bonny sunny day, and I am thinking to take out your dead claes and gie them a bit air, ye'll like to think they're lying on the gowans ye ken."*

* Those who are not aware of the extreme anxiety felt by the peasantry of Scotland on this subject, may imagine the scene in the text to be overdrawn; but whoever has had any opportunity of observing the care with which the poorest cottager prepares for the decent arrangement of his remains for their long resting-place, will have no difficulty in acknowledging its fidelity. So far from shrinking from the contemplation of the last scene, they only think

“But Mary, my poor Mary!” faintly ejaculated the invalid; “she could na stand seeing them.”

“Weel, man, and is na that one o’ my principal reasons for speaking o’ it the day? No, the puir silly lassie canna bear to hear tell o’ them, let a’ be seeing them; it’s a great weakness, nae doubt, but we all hae our weaknesses. But is nae this the market-day, and is nae she in wi’ the butter? and I’ll hae them all locked into the muckle kist again, aside the gude man’s, afore she comes hame, and she will be nane the wiser; na, na, I winna vex the puir thing, tho’ I canna but wonder that she would nae like to see what I hae taen sae muckle pains on, and what ye are to wear on sic a principal occasion; but I am sure, William, ye can testificate to your father, and to her, and to them all, that I have no been a step-mother, but a real mother to

of preparing for it with decorum; and those even who have scarce a table or a chair, and may be scantily enough supplied with bed-clothes, will yet have an ample web of fine and well-bleached linen to be buried in. It may be added, that the whole dialogue is given exactly as it was uttered.

you, and the bairn's yet unborn that can say I hae been a mother o' partialities. Na, na, the gude man himsel' shall no be better put on than ye shall be, or lie mair like ane o' consideration; and I hae been saying to mysel', that braw new holland shirt, that ye brought frae your travels, that shirt I'll make mutches o', and wear wi' a black ribbon, for your sake; and I'll take that gold guinea out o' that wee box that ye keep below your head, and buy a bonny mourning gown wi' it, and wear it, too, for your sake; I'll show you a' the respect in my power, so just keep yoursel' easy. And there's my Geordie, he is fast coming up to fill your place to your puir auld father, and he will hae me for a constant beside him, too, ye ken, for I am a hantle younger than your father—for that matter, I might hae been his daughter;—preserve me, but she would hae been an auld woman, your ane mother, had she lived to hae seen this day, and a sair heart she would hae had to hae seen her Willy drapping off like a withered leaf, ganging out like the snuff o' a candle, in the very morning o' his days, and in the very pride o' his manhood; but a' the things

are wisely ordered, and may be, she will ken wherefore, though we dinna perceive it wi' our puir feckless capacities : but whatfore, William, should you be looking sae melancholious at what I hae been saying to comfort ye ? Ye ken it's a scene we' maun all hae the acting o' ourselves alane, and I canna help ye in it in ony ither way than what I am doing, so I'll away and put out your claes, for it's no my belief ye will put ower this very night : you look to me unco like as you were about to step away."

Her words seemed to be indeed prophetic—the old man was awakened at early dawn by a low, faint moaning from the chamber of his son, and in a few moments the inhabitants of the cottage were kneeling by his bedside. An alarming alteration had taken place in the appearance of the invalid : already the ashy paleness of death had overspread his countenance, and his breathing was short and interrupted ; he tried to speak, but seemed unequal to the effort. His father, totally unprepared for a change so sudden, hid his face in his hands, and sobbed aloud.

" O Adam, Adam !" said his wife, " this

is no right—this is no manfu'; wherefore should ye be taking on in sic a way, tempting the Almighty, and keeping the soul o' the puir creature hovering between time and eternity? Should we no conform? Wherefore should we strive against powers and principalities, and against his arm o' might? Has na the Lord given, and shall the Lord no take away? and in all cases maun we not say, 'Blessed be the name o' the Lord?'"

A slight movement on the part of the invalid arrested her words; his eyes were wistfully turned towards the door, and he faintly murmured, "Once more, O but once again."

"It is Mary he'll be thinking o'," said his step-mother; "it 'ill be her he'll be wishing to see:—aweel, I'll do my best to gie him that satisfaction; I'll be off to Hill-side, though I am sair misdoubting I am already ower late wi' my errand;" and rising hastily, she quitted the cottage.

The old man was left alone with his son. The red beams of the rising sun fell on the face of the invalid, and mingling with the ashy paleness of death, gave to his countenance the appearance of one already in a world of

spirits; his eyes were raised to heaven, he seemed engaged in mental prayer, but at the slightest movement they were turned again towards the door, with an expression of anxious hope.

“It’s naething, my son, naething, that ye hear,” said his father, “but the wind soughing amang the branches o’ the auld elm-tree; she canna be here just yet. O William, try to sleep—shut your eyes, and try to sleep for a wee gliff, and it will put off the time, and may be, do ye good.”

The invalid looked wistfully towards his father, and closed his heavy eyes, and for some moments lay motionless and still.

The old man anxiously bent over him, fearful that he should no longer hear his breathing, and terrified for that very stillness he had but the moment before so anxiously desired. But William was not asleep; as footsteps approached he looked up.

“It is only Sandy, my son,” said his father; it is only Sandy off to the Hill to let out the sheep.”

He spoke to one who seemed no longer conscious of his meaning. A sudden change

had passed over the countenance of the invalid, and with one deep-drawn sigh, his eyes had closed again, his head had sunk upon his breast. At that moment the latch was softly lifted, and a light step entered the cottage. The old man heard it not. But light and noiseless as was that step, it struck upon the cold, dull ear of death.

“ Mary,” exclaimed the invalid, half starting from his bed.

The effort seemed supernatural, and was momentary; his head fell back upon his pillow; his countenance became convulsed.

“ He is gone, he is gone !” exclaimed the wretched girl, and threw herself upon the bed.

“ Haud back, haud back !” cried his step-mother; “ gie him air, for the love o’ heaven, gie him air; open that window; dinna ye hear to me? open that window, I say—or the door—onything, onything for air;—this is no death—something has happened to him—I hae seen the like o’ this in my experience; there now, let me get his head up—leave a’ to me,—lean on me, William, and take heart—ye’ll come about yet, man.”

A violent fit of coughing had seized the invalid, and it soon became apparent to all that he had obtained relief from that* which had occasioned his previous alarming symptoms, and his present danger; that danger, after a short period of intense anxiety, seemed to be passing away.

“ Mary, my own Mary,” he murmured, in a scarcely audible voice, “ I feel as if new life were put into me; and as if a mountain had been taken from my breast; it seems to me now as if the Lord will yet raise me up—but I have not strength to say all that is in my heart now—o’ love and thankfulness. I am sair spent; yet it’s no the feeling of death that is creeping ower me now;—it’s sleep, blessed sleep. Come nearer to me, Mary—sit close beside me—put your hand in mine.” He pressed it fervently; his eyes closed; in a few minutes he was asleep.

Oh who can paint the thankfulness of the father’s heart, or the joy of that happy girl, as she listened to his low, quiet breathing, and looked upon the reviving colour of his

* The bursting of an abscess in the lungs.

cheek. But why should I prolong my story?
A few weeks witnessed his returning health;
a few months more, and she became his
happy bride.

CHAPTER XL.

MANY tears were shed during the perusal of this little history, and a long conversation succeeded between Mr. Maitland and Mr. Percy on the character of the Scottish peasantry, to which Mary and Florence listened with much interest. In reading and conversing with Mr. Maitland and their father, they derived incalculable advantages. In their figure and manners they still appeared youthful in the extreme, but their minds were rapidly expanding, and their remarks, though expressed in simple and unaffected language, often surprised and delighted their instructors.

Next day they proceeded on their journey. As they came in sight of the plains of Provence, they were at first much disappointed. Till within three or four miles of Aix, no-

thing was to be seen but barren rocks and fields of stones. They were in perfect despair, for it appeared a soil not capable of producing a blade of grass, and they looked in vain for "the soft green on which the soul loves to repose itself." The road for several miles was monotonously straight, and it seemed to the weary eye as if it never would have had an end. At last, by a gentle ascent, they gained the height. The barren rocks and fields at once disappeared, and the valley in which the town was situated burst upon the view, stretched out beneath them like a lovely garden. The fields, as far as the eye could reach, were parcelled into divisions, covered alternately with vines and wheat, and separated by hedge-rows of the fig, almond, and olive trees. In summer how beautiful must it have appeared, when even at that unfavourable season they were delighted with the richness of the prospect! The view was bounded by vine-covered hills—a feature in the picture which completed the delight of Mary and Florence, who, since their residence in Scotland, had considered a landscape without hills as something approaching

to a world without a sun, or a library without a Shakspeare. With the clean and cheerful look of the town itself, they were much pleased; and having remained quietly at the hotel during the first day after their arrival, they all set out next morning in search of a settled and more comfortable abode. The Cours, which seemed the principal street, (with fountains playing in the middle of it, and shaded on each side by magnificent trees,) appeared to them a most desirable situation; the houses were extremely handsome, and on a very large scale, belonging to the noblesse, who having lost their fortune in the revolution, were very willing to let a part of them in suites of as many rooms as might be required. In the first house they entered, a person, whom they supposed to be a servant, with a large bunch of keys at her side, and rather untidy in her dress, offered to show them the apartments, and did all she could to induce them to take them, observing, at the same time, that they then might have delightful *soirées* together. The familiarity of this remark surprised the whole party extremely; but they were afterwards informed

that this person was the lady to whom the house belonged, and a daughter of one of the oldest families in France. Her apartments, however, were too expensive, and they fixed on a very pleasant suite of rooms in the Cours, which were large and airy, with a southern aspect; there they soon found themselves most agreeably and comfortably situated. A hot fountain was opposite the windows, and nurse had the comfort of bringing in warm water every morning to wash Master Charles, without the trouble of heating it—a more rational sort of thing, she observed, than she could have expected to have found in that outlandish country—“But no thanks to the French for that,” she continued, “for is it not Heaven’s own gift? No, no, the poor creatures can make no hand of boiling a drop of water.”

“Why, nurse, I am sure they often kept you sufficiently in hot water!” exclaimed Florence.

“I beg your pardon, Miss Florence, I am not a narrow-minded person; I will always give them the commendation they deserve, and I will own I never saw a bow or a curtsy

exactly to my mind till I came to France; but as to boiling water they have nae the comprehension of it. Your tea would have been as cold every morning as if it had been drawn from the well, if it had not been for John and me fighting away with our own little kettle."

It were ungrateful, by the way, not to mention this little kettle more particularly. One forenoon, nurse was left alone with Master Charles in the hotel at Paris; when the party returned she held up a little kettle, exclaiming—"See, young ladies, what I have bought in your absence!"

"Why, nurse, you did not venture out, surely?" exclaimed Florence.

"No, but a pedler came to the door."

"But how did you manage, could he speak English?"

"No, not just at first; but I got him into it at last."

So their little kettle, beside proving the comfort of their lives, had been the means of teaching a French pedler to speak English.

Master Charles enjoyed his warm bath extremely; there was no more crying in the

nursery in the morning; he splashed about, singing—"Over the water to Charlie," and enjoyed himself greatly. He was now quite a little companion to his sisters, talked incessantly, and began even to put some words of very singular French together, to the delight and amusement of Mary and Florence, and the no small annoyance of nurse, whom he seemed to have quite a pleasure in puzzling.

On inquiry, Mr. Percy found that it was the custom for strangers, on coming to Aix, to call upon the inhabitants; this he did not approve of. Mrs. Percy's situation made repose and keeping at home, for some time, desirable, and Mary and Florence he thought greatly too young to be introduced into society; he resolved therefore for the present to remain quiet, but on going to hear a trial of some importance which Monsieur Aimes his landlord mentioned to him, he met with much civil attention from a lawyer, a Monsieur de la B——, engaged on the trial, who entered into conversation with him, and gave him an account of the different forms in their courts of justice; and on being made ac-

quainted by Mr. Percy with the present state of his family, he offered to bring several of his friends to visit them, saying—"that if a little quiet society at home would not be disagreeable to Mrs. Percy, he could introduce to them some of the first families in the place, and that in no town in France could he have found such superior society, both as to rank and talent, as Aix afforded."

This kind proposal Mr. Percy found he could not decline without rudeness, and in a short time they became acquainted with many agreeable people, who, together with Monsieur la B—— often spent the evening with them. Monsieur la B—— frequently walked out with them in the forenoon, and gave them much information as to the state of the country, and also many anecdotes of the revolution. The Marquise de la G——, who was the most beautiful woman in Aix, he told them, had suffered much in the revolution, and was only now returned to her hotel in the Cours. The Marquis had for some time wandered about Italy as a travelling pedler, with a box of threads and tapes upon his shoulders.

Monsieur la B—— was a widower, and had one little daughter of fifteen; he brought her frequently to visit the girls, as he said he wished her to improve by the English manners. She was not pretty: a stiff little thing, with a hundred petticoats plaited full about her, very like a Dutch doll, and almost as silent; she had just been brought home from the convent, and her timidity was extreme, Florence, after repeated trials to induce her to enter into conversation, gave it up as hopeless; but Mary was more patient: her extreme gentleness gained upon the little girl: she acquired courage by degrees; her sweetness of disposition and liveliness, as she became more at ease, endeared her to them both, and Florence once more resolved never again to decide by first appearances.

“Who would have supposed,” she exclaimed, as Thérèse one morning left the room, “that there was so much liveliness in that demure-looking little thing? Well, Mary, you certainly have all the merit of awakening her into life; your patience is something quite astonishing; there seems no subject too hopelessly dull for your exertions. How do you

manage it? I tried very hard with Thérèse : I persevered for two whole mornings; if you but knew how tired I got of that perpetual frightened little smile, and that eternal ‘*Oui madame : non, madame.*’ I would have given the world to have seized hold of her arm, and have given her a good shake. Have you never an inclination, Mary, to try this method with those desperately silent characters?”

“No, Florence, I cannot say I have; and I am only too thankful this is not a general propensity in human nature, or my own poor arms would run no small risk of dislocation; it would be strange indeed if I did not feel for others. Oh if you knew what it is to be seated next to one whom you would really wish to talk to, and to think, and think, of something to say, and find all too silly for utterance; and when at last a bright thought does bless one’s memory, to set off with heroic boldness, and suddenly, ere the idea is half expressed, to find it wrapt in a dingy cloud: all sense, all sound, failing at the same moment! Oh how many must think me the most silent and hopelessly stupid person in the world!”

“Silent they may sometimes think you, Mary, but stupid never ; you are not quite so fond of talking, to be sure, as some people I know, but you have a way of saying wonderfully sensible things with your eyes. You can’t think how often I catch myself stealing a look at them, when running on in full career. How lucky it is for the comfort of the house that we are so different ; how often when we were travelling did I envy you ! There you used to sit so tranquilly, admiring the view from the window, or playing with little Charles, looking as contented as if you were there for life, while I was in a perfect fidget at the horses not being brought out, or like to go wild at the man for not making out the bill quick enough. I do think I am a little better in some things than I was in my youth, but in others I fear I am still a sad profligate character.”

“There is no doubt of it ; but still it is wonderful what an affectionate sister will overlook ; and I like you, Florence, with all your wild ways ; so pray continue to admire my stupidity, and to think my silence elo-

quent. But here are we chattering away, and quite forgetting that it is past the hour when we should be reading aloud to mamma. Come, let us go to her !”

CHAPTER XII.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ Aix en Provence, 20th December.

“ THREE weeks have now passed pleasantly away ; I scarce know why I have not said so sooner, but in this way my journal will not even serve to refresh ‘my own private brain.’ It seems but a summer day since our arrival, for the weather here is still warm as with us in summer ; we are sitting with open windows, walking out with muslin scarfs, and resting under trees still in rich foliage, the fields around us quite green and covered with wild-flowers. We gathered the blue scented violet the other day, and observed the strawberries in blossom. When the mis-tral, a north-west wind, blows, it is bitter

cold, but since our arrival we have but twice experienced this disagreeable change; all as yet has been beyond our expectations, and I do not think any of us will ever forget the kindness and hospitality we are daily receiving here. With Monsieur de la B—— we are more and more pleased every day: our landlord tells us he is esteemed the first lawyer and the most eloquent man at Aix. He added, that he was ever ready to undertake the cause of the widow, or orphan, and that the day of the acquittal of a prisoner was always a day of triumph and happiness to him. It is to this gentleman that we are indebted for an introduction to many most agreeable people, and they come to us in the easiest and pleasantest way. Last night, when almost on my knees blowing the fire, I turned round, on hearing a slight movement in the room, and saw the Marquis de P—— and the Marquis de la G—— bowing to papa and mamma. They had tapped at the door of the saloon, but I had not heard them; however, I was not much disconcerted, for marquises are very plentiful here, and not at all discomposing; for the Marquis de la

G——, taking the bellows from me, soon gave us a cheerful blaze, round which we all sat, and heard from him and his friend many interesting anecdotes, and several very pretty songs. In this way our evenings frequently pass pleasantly away, and our mornings are often not less agreeable. The scenery in the interior of the hills which surround this valley is romantic and beautiful, and we have had several delightful expeditions. Dear mamma, I am sorry to say, is not yet able to accompany us; we have gone with papa and Mr. Maitland, and with Monsieur la B—— for our guide. Never do we tire of listening to the varied and interesting information which he pours out on all subjects; and it is with feelings new and strange that we find ourselves seated in some grassy dell, gazing on a world hitherto unseen by us, and under shady trees, and by the side of clear brooks, listening to all the eloquence of French declamation in accents truly Parisian. We sometimes repeat part of these conversations to nurse, when we return home. You can have no idea how clever and amusing her remarks often are; but she seems somewhat

afraid lest we should get too intimate with our friends. 'No, no, Miss Florence,' she said to me the other day, 'don't allow yourself to be carried off your feet with these French—they are very civil and full of compliments, and will make you many a fine *speakalation*, I have no doubt, but they are not the right down right kind, for all that; there is Master Charles, he seems to have a natural perception that he should not be familiar with them—he would by no means say his lesson to Mr. la B—— the other day, though he coaxed him ever so, and yet where will you see such a clever boy? a most excellent scholar he is; no need to *hound* him to his book, like most young gentlemen.' 'But, nurse,' I observed, 'I had no idea he was so great a scholar; I thought he only knew the three first letters of the alphabet.' 'A well, Miss Florence, and is not that a great deal for a young gentleman of his years? but it is no Master Charles, but these French we were speaking about,' she added, looking extremely hurt, and evidently wishing to change the subject, 'and no doubt you owe them civility for the grapes

and *bouquets* of flowers they are always sending you; but I would like ill to see you making great friends of them, for all that.' I must not, therefore, say a word more in praise of Monsieur la B—— for this day at least, for I would not hurt nurse's feelings for the world; so adieu, dear Emily. Oh how good in you to turn out the Emily of the apple-pie; we owe you a debt of gratitude for that which never can be repaid."

"22nd December.

"We all went the other day with Monsieur la B—— to see a chateau near Aix, where Pauline, the Princess Borghese, used to reside. The apartments were beautifully fitted up. In the saloon where she had her evening parties, everything looked as if quite recently in use; on her writing-table lay her pen, with the ink scarcely dry upon it; in another corner stood her work-table; books were lying up and down; cushions and footstools were scattered about; but all was silent where mirth and gaiety so lately reigned; and we stood before a marble bust, her mute resemblance, with feelings of admi-

ration, not unmixed with pity, at a change so rapid. Though a very bad woman, she yet showed at times a kind heart. A cousin of Monsieur la B——'s was ordered to join the garde d'honneur. The institution of this corps was one of the last and most unfeeling acts of Bonaparte's power. It was composed of the sons of noble families, and Napoleon being well aware that the rich would rather pay high than allow their sons to serve in his guard, had made the ransom exorbitant. The mother of this young man was inconsolable—he was an only son—and the sum demanded she was unable to pay. In her distress, she applied to Monsieur la B——, who had at one time been of service to the princess. He was most kindly received by Pauline, but was told that Bonaparte had strictly prohibited her interfering in any matters of a military nature. She offered immediately to apply for himself to be made préfet, (which he declined,) but assured him she could do nothing for his relation. He saw, however, that he had touched her feelings, and he did not leave her till she

consented to write. The result was, that the young man was restored to his family.

“ In our ramble amongst the hills this morning we met a procession of nuns ; Monsieur la B—— informed us they were an establishment of Ursulines, a very strict order. Those who provided for the establishment were ordered only to buy spoilt provisions for food. They fasted often for weeks together, and slept on boards a foot in breadth, with scarcely any covering. The whole dress of these miserable creatures consisted of a shift and gown of coarse hard flannel. Part of their employment is to educate children ; and when we met them they were walking out with their young charges. The children walked before, chanting a hymn ; it was very touching to hear their sweet youthful voices, and, as papa observed, it made one’s blood freeze to think of their being committed to the care of those rigid skeletons. The melancholy song of those poor children led the conversation to music in general, and then to the troubadours ; and oh with what feelings of glowing interest did we learn,

lf to intreat that they might be allowed
to a little dance she had arranged for
. They went with their father and Mrs.
-. On entering the ball-room, the
guise came forward to meet them, look-
more beautiful than they had ever seen
her hair dressed low, in the English
on, beautiful glossy ringlets curling
; her face, and a wreath of lily of the
7 binding in her hair. On looking
l the room, they found all the ladies
adopted the English fashion; and she
them they had agreed to do so that
ng in compliment to the English ladies,
hat she had sent to Paris for the wreath
then wore. One other ball they were
ed to go to, which completed the dissi-
n of the winter; it was given by the
guise de R——, on her son, Conte
s, birth-day. They were first received
ie card-room, brilliantly lighted up and
with company,—then conducted into
her handsome apartment fitted up as a
re. The curtain rose, and the young
e Jule came from behind the scenes, and
complete self-possession, though at the

same time with great elegance, addressed the audience, apologising for his inability to amuse them as he could have wished: he concluded by singing, with a sweet musical voice, and much expression, a French air, and then skipping lightly over the stage, returned, leading in the principal actress from the theatre at Aix, and they performed together a little dramatic interlude, composed for the occasion, which being the first entertainment in the style of a play which our young friends had ever seen, interested them greatly. They were next led into the saloon, brilliantly lighted up, and decorated with flowers; the folding-doors flew open, and a party of ladies and gentlemen, dressed as shepherds and shepherdesses, with their pipes, crooks, and garlands, danced into the room, and the evening concluded with a ball.

In England one would have expected to have seen in those gay beings young men and blooming girls, but here it was otherwise; they were old experienced shepherds and shepherdesses, who had braved many a summer's sun and winter's frost; but they danced, capered, and whirled about, to the

fect astonishment of the English party.

France, dancing really seems a passion, and is confined to no age, sex, or figure; one may waltz with a desperate resolution, bidding defiance to all the warnings of time. At many of those apparently frivolous meetings had displayed during the revolution fortitude and a disinterestedness truly heroic.

"They are but an additional example of the inconsistency of human nature," observed Mr. Maitland, as he sat next morning listening to Florence's lively description of the wonderful strength of constitution these early ladies and gentlemen had evinced during the evening. "It is very ridiculous, certainly," he added, "but beware of judging them too harshly, my dear girl. We, too, have our inconsistencies."

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

"January 30.

"We have had very cold weather the whole of this month, but it is now beginning to get mild again. The cold, I think, set in

about the 1st of January; once or twice we have had a snow shower, but the snow never lay on the ground, though we have had some bitter frost in the mornings, and ice in the streets; in the forenoons the sun generally still has such influence as to make our walks very agreeable, and with the help of the carpet we picked up by the way, and our Rumford grate, we defy the cold of the evenings. Papa has had the chimney Rumfordized, to the astonishment of the French, who never had seen anything like it before. Our friends are quite amused by papa's efforts to make us comfortable, and he has succeeded perfectly, for our rooms are as clean and as nicely arranged as if we were at home. *Home!* that dear word, when shall we see home again? Papa has had a letter from Ralph; he gives a good account of all his own family, and says old Thomas is wonderfully improved in health, and has been working, himself, in our gardens,—he has planted a hedge of roses round mine, and a great many new American shrubs in Mary's. Ralph adds, in a postscript—'Please tell Miss Percy her birds enjoy their health, and

the grey one is greatly improved in temper—mother has never been obliged to put him in punishment but once since she left.’

“ We have been to visit several chateaux in the neighbourhood since I wrote last, but the days are gone by when a French nobleman lived happy in the seat of his ancestors. Those splendid chateaux are now generally deserted, and their silent halls, with tarnished gilding and decaying tapestry, alone bear witness to their former grandeur. We went to visit, the other day, the chateau of the Marquis de B——, who is one of the richest noblemen of Provence. We made a large party, having with us several carriages and a numerous escort of the French gentlemen on horseback. When near the chateau, the Marquis rode on before to have the gates opened, and we were received by troops of servants, and regaled with an elegant collation; but even here the lofty rooms showed but the traces of their former splendour, and the walks through the park, the seats, the temples in the woods, and the superb gardens, were fast falling to decay. Weeds floated on the surface of the ponds, in which

beautiful fountains still played, and rank grass was waving round the marble statues which terminated the forsaken alleys;—all showed the riches, the care, the taste, of a former generation, and the neglect and carelessness of the present. The situation of the chateau itself was perfectly beautiful; but when papa remarked on its natural grandeur to the Marquis, and expressed his astonishment that he could abandon it in this way, he only shrugged his shoulders, exclaiming, ‘*Ah oui ! c’est vrai, c’est superbe, mais ce n’est pas Paris, c’est toujours ici un triste séjour.*’ Here the desolation that we saw around was not the result of poverty; but in many of the other chateaux we have visited, it is very sad to trace the effects of the revolution amongst the higher ranks, and in the houses of the neighbouring peasantry we often see the white marble slabs and gilded tables which formerly adorned the halls of their masters.”

“ January 31.

“ I was interrupted yesterday by visitors coming in, and now I don’t remember what

more I meant to have said about gilded tables and marble slabs, and deserted chateaux, but they certainly are an extraordinary nation. We were astonished this morning by a loud flourish of trumpets, and on looking out we beheld a superb triumphal car, preceded by six *avant* couriers, mounted on beautiful horses, and dressed in scarlet and gold, with trumpets in their hands; in the car was placed a band of musicians, and it was followed by an open carriage lined with crimson velvet and gold lace: in this carriage sat a little fat man, reclining in a sentimental attitude. The whole cavalcade halted immediately below our open windows. The little man arose with much dignity, though still rather fat, and uncovering a sort of magazine, which projected from the carriage, displayed an almost endless variety of bottles, from the largest to the smallest dimensions; then advancing to the front of the carriage, he laid his hand on his heart, bowed low to the audience, and exclaimed—‘*Messieurs, dans l’univers il n’y a qu’un soleil, dans le Royaume de France il n’y a qu’un Roi, dans la medicine, il n’y a que Charini.*’

With this he placed his hand on his heart again, bowed low, and then drew himself up with a look of the most ludicrous complacency. His address was received with the most rapturous applause. And who do you think was this illustrious hero?—only a quack doctor. He went on with a long oration which I cannot repeat; but his eloquence seemed to have all the success he could have desired. His bottles were purchased in dozens; and we were told that this man has realised a princely fortune, and can well afford to travel in state.

“I don’t think I have anything more of importance to tell you, except that the price of grapes has risen considerably. We were sadly shocked on going to the fruit-market this morning to be asked two sous a pound; but we remonstrated violently, and were allowed to fill our basket at three farthings a pound. This, however, we were assured, was for the sake of our beautiful eyes. Old Thomas would tremble if he heard the fine compliments which are paid to us when we go to purchase fruit and flowers in the market-place; but nurse does all she can to preserve

our sober-mindedness. I have great delight in repeating to her all the fine speeches which are addressed to us—it works her up into such a state of indignation. ‘It will be long,’ she says, ‘before these French learn anything like common sense, or *rationality*, for all the humbling lessons that have been read to them.’ It would quite surprise you to hear how well-informed she is with regard to all that took place during the revolution.

“ ‘Why, nurse,’ I observed to her the other day, ‘you surely must have read on the subject.’

“ ‘To be sure I have, Miss Florence; must not I inform myself to be able to converse with Master Charles? he is a real sharp boy—he must have the truth of things—he will by no means be put off when he asks a question. So I got John, before we set out on our travels, to buy me a book with the whole black story; and many a time, when I hear of them dancing and capering about in such a fashion, I am in bewilderment that they can ever lift up their heads again after the acting of such a tragedy.’

“ ‘But, nurse,’ I answered, ‘our friends

took no part in the revolution ; on the contrary, they, many of them, lost nearly all they possessed by it.'

" ' Well, Miss Florence, all I can say then is, that they have light hearts as well as light heels, and that they are long of coming to the years of discretion. I wish they may not skip and caper over that time altogether ; but I am no blaming particularly them we are amongst at this present time—only I am not fond of hearing you calling them friends, for they are birds of an ill nest. Poor creatures ! after all, it is not their fault altogether that they *are* French ; but keep you your distance Miss Florence, and make you a curtsy when they make you a bow—there's no much ill can come of that.'

" It is quite a hopeless business to overcome nurse's prejudices against the French ; it will not be her fault if Master Charles is not a keen royalist.

" ' Oh, my dear boy,' she exclaimed the other morning, ' I hope I will never live to see the day that you will not stand up for the king and the constitution.'

" ' Me stand on both legs,' he answered,

looking up in her face with alarm, as the disconsolate image of the stork seemed to cross his imagination.

“ ‘ Yes, my little man, and that you will ; for indeed it will take both legs to make a stand against Democrates and *Robert-pearses*, and all that fearful crew that you will be meeting with through life.’

“ Mamma calls me—adieu !”

CHAPTER XIV.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ February 4.

“ O EMILY ! that you were here to share our promised pleasure. Why have I not a fairy wand ? I have been laying a dear little book, bound in red morocco, on the table—dressing flowers which Monsieur la B—— sent us this morning—and placing chairs for papa, mamma, Mary, and Charles ; there are still two chairs remaining—how can I occupy both ? Why—why are you not here ? But what is all this, you will say—what is this promised pleasure ? Why does not Florence explain ? Well, Florence must explain, and try to be methodical ; but how difficult, when in a few minutes she may be transported to Wallachia ? Yes, Emily, to Bucharest, the capital of Wallachia. Now you shall hear all about it.

I do not know if you are aware, that at one period of Mr. Maitland's life, he was sent by government to Bucharest, on a mission of a political nature. We have often wished to ask him particulars of this journey, but as Mrs. Maitland accompanied him, we have been withheld by the fear of awakening painful recollections.

“ When Mary and I returned from a walk this morning, we found little Charles seated on Mr. Maitland's knee, and listening with delight to a description he was giving him, of a pass through the Carpathian mountains. We expressed so much interest in his descriptions, that he, always anxious to procure us subjects of information and amusement, soon after left the room, and returning with a small manuscript book, which he put into papa's hands, he said, ‘ This is the journal of the beloved companion of my travels. I feel I could not trust myself to hear it read aloud; but you might look over it, dear Sir, and read to Mrs. Percy and the girls, any passages which you think may amuse them; great part of it is of a domestic nature, which they had better read to themselves.’ Papa

has been engrossed with it all the morning and has marked several passages which he is to read to us. He is now engaged in writing a letter; but as I see he is about to finish, I must lay aside my writing, and get my work in readiness."

The letter was sealed and addressed—the work-baskets placed on the table—a pencil and paper given to Charles—and Mr. Percy opened the little red book, and read the following

EXTRACTS FROM MRS. MAITLAND'S JOURNAL.

"Hermanstad, Oct. 9.

"Mr. Maitland came into the room a little while ago, with information as to the road by Cronstad to Bucharest, (which we had intended to take,) which had distressed him extremely; it is said to be in very bad order—longer than the other way, and the risk of being detained for want of horses is considerable; besides which, the country is in so very unhealthy a state at present, that no one, for some weeks past, has attempted the road by Cronstad. What then remains? We must

go, after all, by the dangerous mountain-pass of the Rothun Tourn, and put our trust in him who has conducted us thus far in safety. It is too late to set out to-day, for, from being so long delayed by the hilly stages yesterday, we did not reach this till after the bank was shut; and it is only now that Mr. Maitland has been able to procure our drafts. We are two hundred miles from Bucharest, and the banker tells us there is no place where we can remain for the night—nothing better than those miserable huts we have been passing these last two days, without glass in the windows, and where men, women, children, and cattle, are all huddled together. We are, therefore, to travel during the night, as long as I am able for it, and to stop for an hour or two, that I may sleep in the carriage, if unable to go on. I have been so unwell to-day, that I have not been able to leave the house, except for about ten minutes, to walk through the principal street here. It is but a third-rate sort of town—the houses small and poor-looking: no buildings going on, and the spirit of improvement nowhere visible. The inn in which we now are is of considerable

size, but seems tumbling to pieces,— propped up with wood, and the plaster peeling off the walls. We met several ladies as we walked along, all of them in lace or gauze caps, with a profusion of artificial flowers. Many of them wore silk dresses, without any neckerchief, but with a scarf thrown loosely over the shoulders, as if dressed for the evening— strange figures they appeared to us, picking their way through their dirty streets. The peasants, though rather untidy in their appearance, wear a picturesque head-dress; their hair, which in general they have in the greatest profusion, is plaited as a bandeau round the head, and above this they have a roll of white muslin twisted round and hanging down on one side. Some have a large round straw-hat above this turban; they wear coloured petticoats, generally of some bright colour, loose white sleeves, and a breast-plate of black leather, which last is extremely ugly; they are a remarkably good-looking people, many of the young girls extremely pretty. The men, though in dress as savage-looking as possible, are also very handsome, dark, Spanish-looking people.

“ Both in Hungary and Transylvania there are a great many gipsies ; we often met most picturesque groups, and were frequently driven by gipsies. At one of the postes we had a very handsome gipsy boy as postilion ; he wore a black cap, with a bunch of artificial flowers on one side, his dark hair hanging in curls on his shoulders—a jacket and trowsers of white linen, the trowsers so very wide as to look exactly like a petticoat, and a broad black leather belt round his waist: this is a very common dress of the men here—sometimes they have a sheep-skin jacket above this, hanging loose, the wool inside and the leather outside, embroidered with gold and coloured silk, but generally so dirty as to make the colours scarcely discernible. I must now leave off writing, as it is getting late. I was interrupted in the forenoon, by having some necessary arrangements to make for to-morrow. We start at six in the morning.”

“ Bucharest, Capital of Wallachia, Oct. 19.

“ I must now try to detail the events of the last few days. When we quitted Hermanstad, we were told we must take provisions for

three days, and not expect to find any sleeping place by the way, so our expectations were not brilliant ; and Mr. Maitland's anxiety as to how I should be able to stand the fatigue was very great. I have reason to bless God that I did make it out so well ; and as to the rest, our progress through Wallachia has proved much the most interesting part of our journey. I have no words to describe the beauty of the mountain scenery which we have passed through, the bold rocks, the magnificently-wooded heights, the deep flowing rivers, the little rills, the sweet valleys, and green glades. We were lost in admiration—we had no time to be afraid : it was only on arriving at Bucharest that we found we were aching in every joint, and that it was quite enough, once in a life-time, to have passed through the Carpathian mountains.

“ We left Hermanstad at six on Monday morning, Oct. 10th. There were heavy drops of rain and lowering clouds and mist on the mountain-tops, but all cleared away during the first stage, and the day was splendid. About nine o'clock we reached Boitza, a little village at the foot of the mountains, near which is

the Rothun Tourn, or Red Tower, which gives its name to the pass. It is now repaired, and a garrison for soldiers. The banker had bespoken a guide for us; and a company of soldiers were drawn out and presented arms as we passed. Mr. Maitland had written to the public authorities at Bucharest, to mention our intended arrival; but we had no idea to what this would lead—the Prince of Wallachia had raised the whole country to receive us. We certainly did pass the Rothun Tourn in a style, which will long serve as a fairy tale for our little Ersie.

“About a mile from Boitza is the Lazaretto, where we cross the frontiers; and here a scene presented itself to us most unexpected and bewildering. A team of ten horses, with three postilions in embroidered sheep-skins, was prepared for our carriage; two adjutants with splendid uniforms, and bearing long lances, were appointed to attend us; and a troop of armed peasantry was in readiness to ride before and behind. It is difficult to give an idea of the picturesque appearance of those men, with their large brimmed hats stuck round with flowers, their

sheep-skin jackets thrown loosely about them, their leathern girdles, their richly-studded pistols and yatagans—each man leaning against his horse. Oh ! it was indeed a scene most enchantingly barbaric. Then we had our mountaineers simply clad in long canvass shirts and sandals, their long black hair flowing on their shoulders, and looking wilder than the wildest imagination can conceive. A rope was fastened across the top of the carriage, the two ends of which were held by those men, who ran along by the side, while two others held each door, and in this manner we proceeded on our rugged way. The pass of the Rothun Tourn, which extends for a distance of ten miles, is formed by the River Aluta, having forced its way through the heart of the mountain. The road is merely a shelf of the rock overhanging the river, and so narrow in some places as to require beams of wood laid across to add to the breadth, so as to enable a carriage to pass over. These rough logs, which form the road, are supported by upright beams driven into the bank of the river. When the turns of the road enabled us to see those

slender bridges, hanging as it were in mid-air, over which our heavy carriage had to pass, it did look rather appalling—trees in some places formed a parapet, but in many parts there was none, so that had the horses started aside, we must have been precipitated into the stream below; but God's protecting arm was around us, and we were conducted in safety.

“ Our mountaineers were of great service to us, at one moment clinging to the carriage like squirrels, at another running along the rocks like wild goats. The road at one time consisted of a flight of deep, rough steps in the rock, as steep as an attic staircase. We had difficulty enough in walking down those steps; the carriage must have been rent in pieces if it had not been almost completely lifted down by these men; but amidst all those dangers, nature was so magnificently sublime, that we could only feel admiration. At last we cleared these ten miles of the pass, and began alternately to ascend and descend the mountains, but with an addition to our team of four oxen, and a great increase of out-runners to push the carriage up the steep

ascents. I counted at one time twenty-four of our mountaineers around us. Of the picturesque and wild appearance of the whole cavalcade, when put in motion, no one can form an idea—our out-runners uttered screams like mountain eagles, the postilions shouted, the peasantry chaunted, and the rocks gave back the sound;—we were in a state of perpetual bewilderment. In this way we proceeded for the most part of three days and two nights, resting only on the first night for a few hours in a cottage in the heart of the mountains. But this was not all, everywhere we found a table spread for us in the wilderness: the first of these unexpected repasts took place in the middle of the night. We were asleep in the carriage, when suddenly it stopped before the door of a tall, white house. We were handed out by splendid-looking men, glittering in gold, with magnificent turbans, and holding flaming torches; and presently we found ourselves in a large room, hung with draperies, and fitted up with divans; and were seated at a table, on which the feast was quickly spread, as if by magic. We rubbed our eyes, and asked if it were a

ream; but the many good things set before us were pleasant proofs of reality, and the fruits and confectionary which followed might have graced the table of a prince. We looked at the white beards and black beards which stood behind our chairs—at the Greeks, Turks, Albanians, and Armenians which filled the apartment; and we felt that the Arabian Night's Entertainments were tame, when compared to our midnight repast in Wallachia.

“ All this had been arranged for us by the prince. We were in one of the government houses, which had been fitted up for our reception; in the inner apartments divans were prepared for us to pass the night, but this we declined, as we were anxious to proceed on our journey. Orders had been given for our being received at a convent next morning, but we did not stop there. We found, however, in readiness, at another of the government houses, a dinner which must have well diminished, if not totally extirpated, all the poultry in Wallachia. Our farther progress, as we advanced, was one continued scene of excitement and variety,—our followers in-

creased at every post. The English consul¹ had also sent his secretary, and principal Albanian, to escort us; they came up with us on our first day's journey through the pass, and from every mountain side and distant valley the inhabitants flocked in troops to see us pass along. In the night the scene was always picturesque beyond description; at every post the fire of wood kindled on the ground, throwing its alternate flickering and flashing light on dark gipsy faces, armed peasantry, and teams of horses, all in readiness for our use.

“As we advanced within a few miles of Bucharest, we entered on a wide, extended plain, unvaried by tree or shrub. The roofs of a few wretched hovels, on the surface of the ground, alone were visible; and from these dark holes in the bosom of the earth, miserable little black, naked gipsy children were crawling in and out. A little way farther on we were met by a troop of Cossacks—a guard of honour sent to escort us,—and by them we were conducted through the town to the house appointed for us.”

"Oh how delightful!" exclaimed Florence, (as Mr. Percy paused for a moment,) "ten horses, four postilions in embroidered sheepskins, out-riders, and out-runners, moun-ineers on foot, and Cossacks on horseback; now are we to submit to travel *en voiturier* after this, and be content with one attendant and a coat and waistcoat?"

"It is a hard fate, indeed," observed Mr. Percy; "and here I have marked an account of Bucharest to read to you, and the description of a skeleton saint, in white satin, and of a marriage party sparkling in jewels, which I am afraid, Florence, will make our quiet proceedings here appear rather tame. Let me go on, however."

"October 29.

"We generally order the carriage every day about two o'clock, and drive out a little way into the country. I should like to take great deal more exercise; but here no lady can walk in the streets, they are in such a state of mud, and confusion of every kind, even when we leave the carriage to walk a little way in the fields, we must be followed

by an Albanian—indeed, the wild, savage-looking creatures one meets at every step, make such protection very desirable. No one can form an idea of the rough and imperfect style of things here, though, from some points of view, the town has a very imposing look ; the buildings are spread over a circumference of eighteen miles : its three hundred and fifty-one churches, with their glittering spires, domes, and minarets, would alone have a fine appearance ; while, added to this, there are the various palaces of the princes of Wallachia, the public buildings, divans, houses of the various consuls, &c., and these, all whitewashed, brilliantly sparkling in the sun, each standing separately with its court and offices, surrounded by acacia-trees and gardens, give it, when seen from a distance, the appearance of a splendid and beautiful city ; but very different is the reality ; there are no regular streets, either of good houses or of shops. The mud-hut and the miserable little hogsty of a shop are frequently next to the palace. Many of the shops are open in front, to the street, so you see into the interior as you drive

along. In one corner you may perceive, asleep upon the ground, a creature with scarce a rag to cover him, another lolling about enveloped in sheep-skins, looking like a wild-beast, and devouring a water-melon; a woman may be next to them also seated on the ground, but in a loose robe of brilliant scarlet, turned up with sable fur, a toque of the brightest green *barège*, her hair brought round her head in rich plaits, twisted with natural flowers, her eyes generally most expressively dark, and her features regular—she is no uncommon object. Others may be seen—some nursing their children, some asleep, some spinning with the distaff—all similarly dressed in different bright colours, and gipsies flitting about them, dark as midnight and wild-looking as savages.

“Then there are the Jews, with their long beards and flowing robes,—their women with their rich head-dresses, their bandeaus of black velvet embroidered with gold and glitter,—their painted cheeks and magnificent eyes. Oh! it is impossible to give an idea of it. There is no end to the variety, or to the barbarism, which is mixed up with all

this show ; it is all very well to drive through, but to walk through the streets of Bucharest would require more courage than most ladies possess ; indeed, to walk would be unsafe, from the state of the streets ; they are narrow and without any foot-pavement ; some have merely planks of wood laid across—a plank is, without scruple, removed as occasion may require ; and down goes a wheel, and in goes a bullock's or a horse's foot ; and seldom do we return from our airing, without witnessing an overturn of some sort or other—generally of a cart of hay or wood, but sometimes also of the smart equipage of a French or Russian consul. Some of the streets are paved but in the rude Bucharest fashion, full of holes, and knee-deep in mud ; cleaning the streets is a mystery unknown. There are a few shops where very pretty French things are sold ; but the mixture of articles in most of the shops resembles nothing we ever saw before ; festoons of rusty nails, bunches of shapeless keys, clusters of magnificent grapes, great pieces of cheese, mountains of dried fish, quantities of green tallow candles, dried Indian corn, and different grains ; coloured tapes of

y hue; buttons and lace; apples, eggs, scarlet peppers,—in short, it would be ess to mention all they do sell in those lachian repositories, and scarcely pos- to mention what they do not. Dress is the prevailing passion here amongst and low; many of the women we saw ose rude shops possess real Cashmere ls and rich sable furs, and even their no petticoats of different bright colours, their open pelisses of the same stuff, with fur, must be very expensive. An nian servant here, in the service of the ish consul, purchased a new dress lately; k two months to have it embroidered; ent to see it every day, and paid for it um of twenty pounds. This man is now rom well, and if not soon better, must his situation; and his master had to ace him money the other day to pay a ician. He has not laid by a single ing.”

CHAPTER XV.

“ Monday, November 7.

“ WE went this morning at ten o'clock to the church of St. Demetrius, where we saw high mass performed, and the Wallachians kiss the hand of the saint. This Demetrius was a holy man of old, who fell into the river here, the Dimbovitzo. At the moment of his fall a blue light was seen to ascend towards heaven, but no one was able to raise the body from the water, till it was revealed to a child in a vision, that she was appointed by heaven for this purpose, which she effected with ease ; and the body is now laid out in a coffin of rich silver workmanship, and covered with cloth of gold, the black withered hand alone exposed to view. We accompanied

the younger Princess G——, and went up to the gallery, where, from behind a screen, we saw the whole Greek service performed. The church was lighted up, the dresses of the priests were most splendid, and the music was pretty, though the voices were not remarkably good. A chair of state, with a canopy of richly carved work, was occupied by the Prince of Wallachia, who sat with his nobles around him. After mass, he was the first that advanced to kiss the hand of the saint. A carpet was spread in front of the platform on which the coffin was placed; the priests in their splendid robes advanced first, and ranged themselves on each side of the coffin; the bishop, a most dignified looking old man, with a flowing beard, white as snow, and robes of purple and gold, held a richly embossed silver salver in his hand, on which was the wafer. The prince then came forward, kissed the carpet three times, then the hand of the saint, then the cross, and lastly partook of the sacrament. It made us shudder to look upon it. All his attendants advanced in their turn, and lastly, the peasantry. We observed that some of them did

not receive the sacrament, but most of them did. We then went down below with the princess, and accompanied her when she advanced to kiss Demetrius's hand. One of the priests observing our stedfast gaze, lifted the embroidered cloth, and showed us the form of the body, which was richly dressed in white satin. As we returned, we observed the shops were shut, and the people all dressed out;—endless were the bright robes, of scarlet, green, yellow, blue, and every shade of colour, and brighter still were the toques and flowers upon their heads; the older and uglier the woman, the brighter were the colours, and the more abundant the flowers. This day is lovely again—the snow is quite melted, and the streets in seas of mud—but the air is mild and delightful.”

“ Monday, December 12.

“ We have just returned from witnessing the marriage of a little girl of thirteen, the daughter of a rich Armenian merchant here. The church was brilliantly lighted up, and spread with carpets, for the reception of the guests. Several priests, in their flowing embroidered

robes, were in attendance; the head of the Armenian church, who performed the ceremony, was an old man of striking appearance: his robes were of pale pink satin, richly embroidered with gold; a scarf of embroidered white satin hung in front in graceful folds; his beard was white as snow, and on his head he wore a crown of crimson velvet, also embroidered with gold. On each side of him stood a young boy in a satin robe, holding a lighted torch of such gigantic size that it required both hands to grasp it; and the other priests in attendance ranged themselves on each side of the altar, which was beautifully lighted up and ornamented with a profusion of gold and silver ornaments.

“Doudouka Ghachimoglow arrived in an open carriage, the horses decked out with draperies of white embroidered muslin. She was accompanied by her mother, godmother, and sister; all were in the Armenian dress except the bride; the carriage came forward at a very slow pace, for the godmother who officiated as bridemaids, held in her hand a lighted torch, ornamented with wreaths of flowers. The little bride was rustling in the

richest satin, and sparkling with diamonds; her head-dress was a plume of white ostrich feathers, a diamond *sevignée*, and a white blond veil, which nearly covered her whole person; her diamond earrings were considerably larger than her ears; her fingers were covered with jewels, and there hung from her neck a medallion of two angels in enamel, set with diamonds—it was a beautiful ornament. As soon as she alighted, her mother adjusted the veil so as to conceal her face as much as possible, and, led by the god-mother with the lighted torch, she slowly advanced towards the altar, followed by her intended. The priest, stepping forward, placed them with their faces to each other, bent their necks till their foreheads touched, and the ceremony immediately began. During the long prayer which succeeded, I could discover the beautiful dark eyes of the little victim more than once raised, as if wishing to have a peep of what was passing around her; but the moment the head was raised in the slightest degree, a priest who stood behind instantly bent her neck again till her forehead touched that of her husband's. It

was a long, and from the attitude in which they were placed, must have been a most fatiguing ceremony. At one time a gold cross was laid on the heads of both, and at another they were bound together by a silken fillet; this fillet had been purified by seven essences, and would be carefully preserved by the married couple as a means of preserving them in the path of virtue—it is always placed upon the tomb of the first who dies. The ceremony concluded by the priest and his torch-bearers, followed by the bride and bridegroom, walking three times round in a circle outside the altar, while a hymn was chanting; and suddenly, in the midst of this solemn walk, a scatter of *bon-bons* took place, which set all the little boys and girls scrambling on the ground, and seemed infinitely to amuse the little bride, who smiled and looked very pretty, and seemed quite relieved to be able to hold up her head again. We then went to the house prepared for her, where, in a few minutes afterwards, she arrived, preceded by the priest carrying a lighted torch. She was led up to us by her godmother—she bent forward to each of us—

we kissed her forehead while she kissed our hand ; and she was then seated on the divan beside us. Preserved cherries and a glass of water was offered to us by the husband, a plain-looking man, of about thirty years of age. Liqueurs and *bon-bons* were handed about by the attendants, and caloons were presented to the gentlemen. The whole scene was a most amusing one ; never can we expect to see again such a profusion of magnificent dark eyes, of sparkling jewels, and superb cashmeres ; it seemed to us as if Aladdin himself must have furnished the rings with which their fingers were loaded. We were particularly struck with a young girl who was covered with jewels and extremely pretty ; we were told that she was a cousin of the bride's, not more than twenty, who had been married at twelve years old ; she is now married a second time, and still looks like a mere girl."

" Tuesday, December 20.

" We took our usual airing in the carriage this morning through seas of mud, to the only road around Bucharest where it is some-

as possible to walk, and what a scene of
lation does the country here present!
either hand a wide extended plain, with-
tree or shrub, or the slightest trace of
station; nothing to be seen as far as the
can reach, but black, muddy earth, partly
r water, where herds of swine are wal-
ng, and the ruins of one large solitary
ie, the roof of which is in some places
ely fallen in—in others, hanging by a
le beam, and the decayed state of the
s showing the interior of many of the
as, with their deserted hearths. Around
ruined building is the favourite halting-
e for the peasants on their way to Bucha-
and here we constantly see immense
of wood, hay, straw, &c. &c., drawn by
s of six or eight buffaloes, so that the
for a considerable way seems covered
those animals, and with groups of pea-
s quietly seated in the mud chewing
garlic in soft luxurious ease; many of
in their rough sheep-skins, scarce to be
rned from the shaggy-looking dogs sleep-
by their side; others with only inner
vents of sheep-skins, their outer vest-

ments being composed of cocks and hens. How our little Erslie would be amused to see the Wallachian peasant trudging into market with live cocks and hens slung all over his body, cackling and crowing in every direction—a walking poultry-yard; nothing visible of the original man save his wild shaggy head, his long black hair blowing in the wind, and his sandalled feet. Then there are the gipsies, those dark, mysterious, picturesque-looking beings—they deal particularly in geese, and are often to be seen moving along with a dozen or two hung around them, the creatures rearing their long necks in the air like serpents, and gabbling furiously. Some of them, again, wear boas of live calves—those are the dandy gipsies; the calf is slung across the shoulders, its poor little feet tied under their chins, its head generally erect, and its large eyes staring wildly around, not apparently liking the prospect before it much better than we do; those gentlemen with the boas wear generally a long, wide, canvass shirt, bound in at the waist with a leather belt, ornamented with brass buttons: this completes their attire,

which is often graceful, and always airy, though not particularly clean. Now, I think, I have said enough of the Wallachian fashions, always an important subject in a lady's journal."

"Saturday, February 4.

"The snow still lies deep upon the ground, but the wind has fallen, and the thermometer is only five degrees of Reaumur below the freezing point, and never yet has been lower than twelve,—last winter it was for a long time at twenty-seven—the snow lay deep, and the frost continued till March 15th, when, as in Russia, it melted suddenly away, the green earth appeared, and in a few days all was bud and blossom; before March was over, asparagus was to be had in abundance, growing wild all over the plains: those very plains which, till the snow hid them from our view, looked so brown and barren, as if not a blade of grass could grow upon them, are, we are told, covered in spring with the richest vegetation, and without being manured, and scarcely cultivated, yield in summer the finest crops; they have no idea of agriculture here

—the ground is scarcely scratched, and the seed thrown in in the most slovenly manner. There seems to have been no improvement on the plough since the time of Cincinnatus, —he must have sent the Wallachians a present of one. The ploughs here are exactly the same as those seen on the old Roman bas-reliefs. After the seed is sown, nothing more is done; there is no harrowing, weeding, &c.; nature does all till it is ready to be cut down with the sickle.

“ The Wallachian peasant has not an idea of laying up money for a future day—he sows merely enough of grain to support his family in the most miserable way. By the side of the door of each cottage, you see the two flat stones used for grinding the Indian corn, and they live upon a sort of porridge made of it, called *mamaliga*; to comfort, in the way of furniture in their cottages, or cleanliness either, they are quite indifferent—cattle, poultry, men, women, and children, being all huddled together. A Wallachian can gain by his labour ninepence a-day, but he never dreams of continuing to labour two days together—he works one day, and spends the

money the next, on rakee, an ardent spirit, of which they are passionately fond; the third is probably a saint's day, and on those *fêtes* it is against their religion to do anything but sleep, or drink, if they still have money to do so. There are more than a hundred saints' days in the year, so that we seldom drive out two days together without finding the shops shut, and the shopkeepers dressed out with toques and flowers.

“Sledging is at present the favourite amusement here, and yesterday Mr. Maitland drove me out in a sledge: how much I did enjoy the air; it was the first time I had been out since my illness. The day was brilliant, though very cold, the barometer ten degrees below the freezing point,—but the whole scene to me was so gay, so new, I was enchanted with it. The vast plains of snow over which we skimmed with the most exhilarating velocity,—the numerous sledges darting past us like skyrockets,—the various groups within, some filled with ladies, their bright robes of different colours contrasted with the dazzling snow, glowing like a bed of

tulips, their heads dressed out with toques and flowers, their cheeks painted, and their eyes sparkling. Other groups of the lower orders, still more picturesque in their various furs and shaggy sheep-skins; and more singular still, the sackagees, or water-carriers, flying along, standing erect on their water-barrels, their long beards hanging with icicles, like sheets of silver, their tattered garments crystallised all over with sparkling drops, looking like some wild unknown animals, richly set in jewels;—it was so new and delightful, I did enjoy it extremely.”


“ February 13.

“ Yesterday evening, our interesting friend, Madame J——, brought her work, and sat some hours with us. Amongst other subjects of conversation, Mr. Maitland inquired if, during her long residence at Constantinople, any of her family had ever been attacked by the plague. She told us that one of her sisters had died of it—that at one time, when it was raging with great violence, they had for months been confined to their house, and totally shut out from all intercourse with

their neighbours ; at last the fearful malady abated, and the young people entreated their mother to be allowed to go into the country to spend a day with a friend. She consented, and they went. At dinner the youngest sister complained of headache ; by the time they returned home, she had become very seriously unwell ; her mother put her to bed, and sat anxiously watching her till the physician arrived. He was instantly alarmed, but as the mother had already been exposed to the contagion, and as it was necessary for some one to attend the child, he said nothing of his suspicions. All remedies proved in vain ; she died next morning, and the poor mother, in performing the last duties to her child, discovered the fatal spot upon her breast. Being obliged immediately to leave the house, and feeling herself becoming unwell, she desired to be removed to the hospital. Her children accompanied her, though placed in a different ward. In the hospital she found a priest attending, who, unmindful of all risks to himself, seemed intent only on speaking words of consolation to many dying creatures around her.

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As she seemed rapidly getting worse, he proposed that he should administer to her the last rites of her religion, to which she thankfully acceded. After having confessed her, he said he thought she had better take a little of a cordial which he had, to strengthen her a little before receiving the sacrament; he was about to shake a small powder into a cup as he spoke, but she interrupted him, and taking a little silver cup from below her pillow, she said, 'Mix it in this; this cup was given me by my dear husband, and I never, since his death, have drunk out of any other.' He obeyed, and gave the cup into her hand; she raised it to her lips—a shudder she could not account for thrilled through her veins—and placing it on the table which stood by her, she said, 'she did not feel inclined to take it then, but would after she had received the sacrament.' In vain he remonstrated—she was firm. He administered the sacrament, then taking the cup, with the mixture in it, into his hands, he held it to her lips; suddenly uttering a loud scream, she exclaimed, 'O my head! let the doctor come to me—I am dying.' The nurse called



the physician ; the moment he entered, the patient exclaimed—‘ Seize the priest ! there is poison in the cup ! ’ It was but too true, the silver cup was discoloured by the poison he had infused into it. Yet this monster was only sentenced to perpetual banishment : his own life was spared, though he had terminated the existence of so many others. He had enriched himself by first becoming intimately acquainted with the private circumstances of his poor patients, and then influencing them to leave him their property ; he afterwards prevented the possibility of their recovery by administering poison to them.

“ I am glad to be able to add, that Madame J——’s mother recovered from the plague ; and neither Madame J—— or any of her other sisters were attacked by it.”

“ This is a singular story,” said Mr. Percy, as he closed the volume ; “ but I must not remain now to comment upon it. We must stop here for the present, for I have an appointment with Monsieur la B —. I am afraid he may have been expecting me for

some time; but it was impossible to leave this poor lady in the hands of such a villain."

"You must tell Monsieur la B—— you were detained by a case of life and death, papa; a lawyer will quite understand that excuse," exclaimed Florence, as Mr. Percy left the room. "Oh!" she continued, "how I did tremble when that vile priest held the cup again to that poor lady's lips, after he had administered to her the sacrament. I quite suspected it was poisoned—did you, Mary?"

"Yes, from the moment it was mentioned that she was averse to swallowing the mixture, and that a shudder thrilled through her veins, I felt assured there was poison in the cup, but I did not feel afraid of her taking it—it seemed to me as if God's protecting arm was around her. How deeply grateful must she have felt for such a blessed interposition of Providence!"

"True, my dear girls," said Mrs. Percy; "and yet is it not strange, that our gratitude should be alone called forth by such signal instances as this? When is there a moment,

Florence, that God's protecting arm is not sustaining, and defending us? The very constancy of his love, and the commonness of his bounty, causes our cold hearts to under-value both. Our daily life is a miracle of power and goodness. The air around us has more deadly poison than the chalice of that wicked friar, but he transforms the poison into the stream of health and safety. Oh what a depth of meaning—what an intense and profound devotion is there in these beautiful expressions, so often on our lips—so little in our heart—‘In Him we live and move, and have our being.’ Yet David knew it well, when he exclaimed, ‘If thou hidest thy face they are troubled, thou takest away their breath, they die and return to their dust.’ ”

CHAPTER XVI.

“ March 3.

“ EMILY, what have I to relate ? To-day we have had startling intelligence. Our landlord, Monsieur Aimes, came in this morning with a most dismal face, to inform us that Bonaparté had escaped from Elba—had landed yesterday at Cannes, within twenty miles of us—and was now at Grace, with a view of penetrating into Dauphiné, where he has hopes of finding many of the people disposed to join him. Papa at first treated all this as nonsense ; but our excellent friend, Monsieur la B——, has just been here, who seems to think that the report really has foundation, and has heard that troops are immediately expected from Marseilles to

protect us. He assures us, however, that we are in no danger, for that there is no place in France where Bonaparté is more generally detested than in Provence. When he came here, on his way to Elba, the people of Aix had so many plans to tear him to pieces, that he was obliged to pass in the night, outside the city walls, with a strong guard to defend him; and even these precautions would have been insufficient, had not the mistral blown so violently, that the people, fatigued with long watching, were not able to stand the cold, and were obliged to disperse. The sous-prefêt of Aix, who accompanied him to the coast, has often given us anecdotes of the way in which he was received by the people of Provence. In every village were displayed the white cockade and fleur-de-lis—in one the people were employed in hanging him in effigy, in another they compelled him to call out ‘*Vive le Roi!*’ and he obeyed them, while his attendants refused: for a part of the way he was obliged to mount a little pony, in the dress of an Austrian officer. Having arrived alone at the village of La Calade, the landlord was

called for, and a little poor-looking figure in plain clothes and a travelling-cap, asked him if he could furnish dinner for twenty guests.

“ ‘ Yes,’ said the landlord; ‘ if you take what fare I have : but I trust it is not for that coquin the Emperor, whom we expect soon here.’ ”

“ ‘ No,’ said the little man, ‘ it is only for a part of his suite. Bring here some wine, and let the people be well served when they arrive.’ ”

“ Presently the landlady entered with wine.

“ ‘ *Ecoutex, bonne femme !* ’ said the little man ; ‘ you expect the Emperor, don’t you ?’ ”

“ ‘ Yes, Sir, I hope we shall see him.’ ”

“ ‘ Well, my good woman, and what do you folks say of the Emperor ?’ ”

“ ‘ That he is a great villain, Sir.’ ”

“ ‘ Eh, my good woman, and what do you say yourself ?’ ”

“ ‘ Shall I tell you, Sir, what I think ? Why, if I was the captain, I would receive him gladly enough, but it would only be to throw him overboard.’ ”

“ The stranger made no answer, and the

landlord, after the arrival of the party, having asked his wife if she would like to see Bonaparte, took her up stairs, and to her astonishment and dismay, pointed to the little man in the travelling-cap.

“ This scene made a deep impression on Bonaparte, for the *préfet* told us, that when the commissaries and he arrived at Calade, they found him with his head leaning on his hand, and in tears. He told them that the people decidedly aimed at his life and that the mistress of the inn, who had not known him, had said he was detested, and that they only meant to take him on board ship to drown him. He would eat or drink nothing he was offered; and though he might have been assured that no ill was then intended him by seeing his attendants partake of a hearty dinner, he sent to his carriage for some bread and water, which he ate with avidity; they then waited for night to continue their journey.

“ We think of all this, and our courage rises; but we are far away from dear England, should this report prove true.”

“ March 5.

“The report of Bonaparte having landed with five hundred men is to-day completely confirmed : he is now at Dijon : as yet he has been very ill received, not a man has joined his standard, and we are in hopes that troops will be sent from all quarters to intercept his progress.

“We spent this evening with Mrs. A—— and her family, (they are still the only English here.) Nothing was talked of but this daring attempt of Bonaparte's, and both the préfet and Monsieur la B—— agree in thinking it a most serious business. Our quiet town is no longer quiet, we hear nothing but the sound of drums and fifes ; the troops that arrived yesterday from Marseilles marched against him this morning, and the national guard are anxious to be allowed to follow. Monsieur la B—— was in uniform, and impatient to set out : he is the friend on whom we would lean most in the event of danger, and we cannot help wishing he would remain. Neither the fine speeches nor the sweet violets of the préfet inspire equal confidence, for he was formerly a great favourite of Bona-

parte, and though he pretends to speak in a very loyal manner, papa seems to think that he still prefers Bonaparte in his heart. This sad intelligence, and the commotion around us, are bad for dear mamma; it must retard her recovery. It is only three weeks since her confinement, and she is still very weak, yet she is in constant cheerful spirits, a daily example of what it is to trust in God, and to feel that his protecting arm is over us all.

The lower ranks have taken the idea that it is the English who have assisted Bonaparte in this enterprise, and that he and his men were landed in English ships. Should this ridiculous notion gain ground, our remaining here will not be very comfortable. Nurse is quite indignant: she says she saw them pointing to her in the streets, and making *murgins* at her, ‘and did not I tell you, young ladies,’ she added, ‘that these French had not common sense? Did ever mortal being hear the like of them saying that it is us that have let out the evil spirit, that we have been thanking God on our very knees for having chained up? A-well, if we were but all safely back again in a christian land! So that he keeps

but in his own bounds of France, I will not be sorry to hear that he is raging and rampaging over them again; for indeed that quiet, peaceable, well-conditioned king can make no hand of such a set."

" March 6.

"Monsieur la B—— has just been here: he sets out to-morrow by day-break, with two hundred of the national guard, and six hundred men who arrived a few hours ago from Marseilles. Papa laughs at our fears, but certainly our hearts died within us when our friend took leave: and is there not cause for alarm? Do you think, Emily, that Bonaparte would have ventured so much if he had not known his ground? Monsieur la B—— promised to write and give us intelligence of their movements. All our friends are going to-day: we found lamentation in every house. The Marquise de R—— and Madame la B—— were weeping for their sons, and the Marquise de P——, with tears in her eyes, was preparing to part with her husband. Yet, even amidst sympathy for them, and not a few fears for ourselves, it was impossible not

to be amused when the Marquise de R—— exclaimed—"Ah the Barbare ! he is taking away my son ; he is ruining my concert. I had fixed it for Thursday, and we were to have had such music,—and Jules my son, my lovely, my beautiful, my charming Jules ! was to have sung ; but Jules is going, perhaps for ever ! *Ah Ciel ! Ciel !* and I had laid out three hundred pounds in repairing my houses at Marseilles, and not one of them will let ; and I had engaged Cipré with his charming violin for Thursday, and we were to have been so gay. O miserable France ! ah my unhappy country !" Most anxiously do we hope that this charming Jules and the others may be in time to prove of use ; for both papa and Mr. Maitland, (though they will not allow that they are afraid) seem to think that much time has already been lost. It is not expected that they now can come up with Bonaparte, but the hope is that he may be intercepted by troops from other quarters, and be driven back, and then surrounded on all sides. I try as much as I can to remember all I hear on this subject, and to write it to you as nearly

in the same words as I can ; but I fear I shall not be very good at detailing military movements—this journal has certainly taken rather an unexpected turn.

“It was hoped that Bonaparte’s progress would have been arrested at a bridge near Sisteron ; a fort overhangs this bridge which could easily have been defended with twenty men, yet he was allowed to pass it without opposition. Mr. Maitland says he is sure there is treason in this. We are most anxious for the news of to-morrow. O that we were in our own dear country again ! How unhappy Aunt Douglas and all our friends will be about us ! Mamma is only pretty well, and the little baby cries incessantly ; the monthly nurse insisted on its being swaddled according to the universal custom. They roll up the children here in long bands of linen and make them as stiff as a piece of board, so that they can toss them about in every direction,—this mamma would not allow ; but not being used to unswaddled babies, the nurse handles it so roughly that we are in constant fear about its delicate little limbs ; but she is soon now to be dismissed, and then nurse will take charge of

the little gentleman. We are not very sure how Master Charles will stand this, but he is a dear little good-tempered fellow, and very reasonable when you talk quietly to him on a subject."

" March 7.

"We are getting every moment more anxious and alarmed, but to-morrow will decide how things are likely to turn out. General Marchand, who commands the troops at Grenoble, is a man, they say, of honour and fidelity; if his troops are steady every one expects that Bonaparte will there meet his doom; but if these troops should join him, the poor Marquise de B—— may well tremble for her unhappy country. We are sadly anxious for the intelligence of to-morrow. If he is not repulsed at Grenoble, he will then march to Lyons, where he has many friends who will join him, and from thence proceed to Paris. Mary does not say much, but I see her frequently change colour as the different reports are brought to us. I am sure she is alarmed. As to me, I will own to you, Emily, I am often very much frightened indeed, and it is a great relief to me to talk about it. I get it

all out, and then I am better. Whenever I feel myself getting very bad I go to Mr. Maitland, and he is sure to calm my mind. Dear Mr. Maitland ! I can see that at this moment his blindness presses heavily upon him. I think it proceeds from the feeling, that were we to be in any danger he could not assist in protecting us ; but do we not already owe him more than ever we can repay ? Is it not he who is every moment of our lives leading us in the sweetest, gentlest way to trust all to our heavenly Father's care.

“ Mrs. A—— and her family seem to think we should all immediately set off for Bordeaux ; this is possible for them, but for us it is out of the question. The little baby is not yet a month old, and it does not thrive as we could wish ; we are all worn out with his incessant crying. I am sure he suffers from that odious French nurse :—‘ *J’ll est plein de vice et de malice, et il ne sera pas bon enfant jusqu’a ce qu’il est baptisé,*’ she exclaimed the other day ; but she goes to-morrow, and we hope we shall soon see an improvement in the little man. It would quite distress you to see how delicate dear mamma

still looks ; how will she be able to make out this journey, should it become absolutely necessary to leave Aix ? The story of the English frigates having assisted Bonaparte's escape from Elba gains ground every hour. Papa does not allow us to go out now, for fear of our being insulted by the lower ranks. This morning at day-break music seemed to mingle with our dreams, but on awakening we became conscious that the sounds, though distant, were real. We jumped out of bed, threw on our dressing-gowns, and in a moment were at the open window : it was the martial music of the national guard, on their way to join the army. The morning was calm and clear, the magnificent trees in the Cours were glistening bright with dew-drops, and the rays of the rising sun gave the clouds of vapour thrown high into the air from the hot fountain opposite to us, the appearance of a curtain of silver gauze, veiling the clear blue sky. As the troops passed under the window, the band struck up a lively air, yet still to us it was melancholy music, and though the bright arms of the soldiers glanced gaily in the sunbeams, the remembrance of

how their brightness might yet be dimmed sent us trembling again to bed. Those were childish fears : in prayer for them and for ourselves they were quickly banished, and in sleep forgotten—in sleep so sound, that slowly and unwillingly the recollection that our friends were indeed gone forced itself upon us in the morning.”

“ Wednesday, March 8.

“ This has been a day of anxious suspense : not till five this evening did the mail arrive from Gap, and the préfet has just been here to tell us that though there is yet nothing decided, appearances are all favourable. On Sunday night Bonaparte slept at Gap, from whence he sent couriers in three different directions, with proclamations inviting the people to join him. His couriers were detained, his proclamations disregarded, and not a man joined his standard : he left Gap furious with rage. Oh Emily ! is not this delightful ! Next day he only advanced two leagues, and when the mail was dispatched the troops from different quarters were fast surrounding him on every side. To-morrow we expect and hope to hear that this evil

it is no longer loose upon the world. The
s of to-night has quite raised our hopes;
mamma is still so weak that we must re-
n for some time longer here, whatever
e the country may be in.

CHAPTER XVII.

“ March 9.

“ ALL this day we have been on the watch, and this mail from Gap has only now arrived, and has brought us no new intelligence. Tomorrow we must hear something decided. Monsieur has arrived at Lyons, which has inspired fresh spirit into the people. We must now have another night of anxiety. Papa looks very anxious, and seems quite at a loss what to do ; he fears that were matters to become worse, which he still seems to dread, mamma might suffer more from the rapid journey we should then have to make, then were we to set out now, and take it by easy stages while the country is still in too much amazement to attend in any way to our motions. We could not sleep last night for

confusion in the streets: the people upright expecting the courier; at one time y and I never doubted but that all had : wrong. We heard our landlord, Monsieur Aimes, go up to his wife's room in the lle of the night, and after talking to her ome time, apparently in violent agitation, heard her weeping bitterly. We found in the morning, that Monsieur Aimes set out in the night to join the army: he keen royalist, but as his wife is in bad th she had prevailed upon him not to sh with the national guard. Some ill-red people had been taunting him with want of spirit, which he could not bear, e is off. Monsieur Aimes seems to think the troops of the line here are not to be ended on; he says that often while he sold a the white cockade, they exclaimed— *bien! c'est bon pour le moment, mais ne durera pas long-temps.* His poor looks very low and dispirited this morn- and we are sorry for her, and also for ng ourselves lost one on whom we could e depended."

“ March 10.

“ Still no further intelligence. We are told that all looks well ; but papa does not seem to like this mystery and stillness.”

“ March 11.

“ Nothing yet is decided, though the reports of to-day are favourable. We have heard from Monsieur la B—— : he says that Bonaparte is within four leagues of Grenoble, and closed in within the space of two leagues with troops on every hand. His escape seems almost impossible ; yet it is feared he may make it out. In one of the towns through which he passed, he held a pistol to the préfet's throat, and obliged him to sign three passports ; but there is now an order published desiring all those to be taken up who have passports signed by this préfet. To-day we were shown an account published by the préfet of the Department of Var, le Conte de Rothellier ; he says, on the 1st of March, Bonaparte entered the Gulf of Juan, and sent sixty men to Cannes, summoning the mayor to prepare three thousand rations, and to come and receive his orders. “ I

obey no sovereign but Louis XVIII." was the answer of this loyal subject, who treated the demand with contempt, though he had neither arms nor ammunition with which to defend himself. Bonaparte, however, effected his landing, and on the 2nd of March passed through Cannes and Grace without opposition, as there were no troops to stop his progress. It was expected——"

" March 12.

" I was interrupted last night, and now, alas ! there is nothing good to relate. May Heaven watch over the unfortunate king and the royal family. The poor Duchesse d'Angoulême, whom we so lately saw restored to all her honours, how she must be trembling ! To-night, papa has had another letter from Monsieur la B—— ; he says that he has no longer good news for us ; that General Marchand has been obliged to retire with a few companies, the rest of his troops having joined Bonaparte, who had entered Grenoble without opposition, and was on his march to Lyons with a very considerable force. If the troops of the line are not in-

spired by the presence of the Conte d'Artois and the Duke de Berri, and do not remain faithful, all will be lost. Mrs. A—— has been here, and there has been a long consultation as to what shall be done. Mrs. A—— is anxious to be off immediately, and proposes our all sailing from Marseilles; but even if mamma were far stronger than she is now, papa would not wish to risk the voyage for her, she suffers so much from sea-sickness; if, to-morrow, affairs appear to be getting worse, papa means to decide on something; he talks of endeavouring to cross by Montpellier and Toulouse to Bourdeaux, but thinks that with the prejudices the lower ranks have against the English, it will be a journey of danger even at this moment; however, were we to wait the issue of this business, the danger might greatly increase, and we might not be able to get away at all. The poor baby still cries very much. This agitation is very bad for dear mamma, and both are suffering from it. How will mamma in her present state be equal to such a journey? but this is no moment to indulge in such thoughts; we must not allow ourselves

to consider what we may have to go through, for are we not, as Mr. Maitland observed this morning, equally the care of Heaven as in quieter hours and more peaceful scenes? How our hearts grieve for the poor Duchess d'Angoulême! what a life of suffering hers has been, and how all this suffering must recal former sorrows! We have written to aunt Douglas constantly, but have little hope now of our letters being forwarded; to-day no mail has arrived from Paris; this mystery too plainly says there is no good news to be told: to-morrow we hope to hear of an engagement between the Conte d'Artois and this bold usurper."

" March 13.

" This has been a day of much agitation. Madame Aimes knocked at our door early this morning to tell us that a courier had arrived. We were told the bad news only too soon. The Conte d'Artois had harangued his troops, but without effect—they shouted '*Vive l'Empereur!*' and refused to follow him; the unhappy prince was obliged to return alone to Paris, and Bonaparte entered Lyons without

the slightest opposition. The poor Duchesse d'Angoulême is never a moment absent from our minds. To-day papa has had a consultation with those of our friends who still remain, as to what is best to be done; they say our crossing the country to Bourdeaux, in the state in which affairs now are, is out of the question, and that here they think it is no longer safe for us to remain. What is then to become of us? These kind people seem to take much friendly interest in our present anxieties; the Procureur-general had tears in his eyes this morning when he looked round upon us all; it was easy to read the expression of his face—he trembled for our danger. He fixed his eyes for a moment on mamma's pale face, then looked at Mr. Maitland, and sighed so deeply! The kindness we have met with here can never be banished from our minds—they seem to feel for us as if we were their relations.

“As soon as our friends had left us, papa set out with Mrs. A——’s son for Marseilles, to endeavour to secure a passage in one of the brigs there. We have heard ten thousand reports of the confusion that prevails

at Marseilles—of their tearing the English to pieces, and setting fire to their houses; but papa did not believe a word of it: and so many stories are told, that there is no getting at the truth of what is passing even in the next village, so we try to believe nothing we hear. Poor old Madeline, Madame Aimes's servant, is shocked with our incredulity—her face is absolutely blanched with terror. This morning, when we were trying to cheer her, she exclaimed, 'Ah, my dear young ladies, you are still light of heart, and in your happy land have walked on flowers; you little know what it is to have your shoes steeped in blood;—I have seen it running at Marseilles, a stream too broad to cross.' Madeline's words sent a cold chill to our hearts; but, oh, Emily, I wish you could have seen the expression of Mr. Maitland's face, when, on repeating them to him, he exclaimed, 'Our strength is in a power unseen—that power has hitherto watched over our happy land. What though this evil spirit is again let loose upon the world? England's splendour has never yet been dimmed; her sons are brave, her cause is just, and her trust is

in Him who seems already to have said to this evil one, 'Thus far shalt thou come and no farther, and here thy proud waves shall be stayed.'

"Yes, Emily, in such thoughts, and in constant employment, we take refuge; we find it quite necessary not to be one moment idle; our room at this moment is like a workshop, covered with frocks and pelisses, which we have been assisting mamma all the morning in cutting out for Charles and the baby. We have engaged a young French girl to take charge of Charles—she is too young and pretty, but mamma could hear of no other, and she is highly recommended; she does not come home to us till we are setting out, and papa says he would wish exceedingly that *la belle* Louise would employ the interval in having the small-pox, but he added, 'Though she gave us many assurances that she was the most amiable and obliging girl in the world, and would henceforth only exist to please us, yet I have some fear that this would be exacting a greater sacrifice than life itself.' Papa seems to agree with nurse as to the lower ranks in France: he

certainly does not think they are to be depended on."

" March 14.

" Papa has not yet returned from Marseilles, but the news of to-day is rather more favourable. It is said, Bonaparte has remained two days at Lyons, which seems as if he were not quite secure in advancing, and that Paris shows itself decidedly for the King. Should this be true, all may yet end well. The remaining part of the national guard was a few minutes ago drawn out before our windows; a proclamation was read, exhorting them to continue faithful to their King; the white flag was displayed, and '*Vive le Roi!*' was shouted by everyone: they marched off to the music of Henri Quatre. The Duc d'Angoulême is expected here to night or tomorrow. Almost every house in the Cours has hoisted the white flag—we have it flying from every window. It would have amused you, Emily, could you have seen the exertions we made to embroider the *Fleur-de-lis* on all the table-cloths we could persuade

nurse to afford us for the occasion—it was, indeed, almost breaking her heart to part with them. ‘Indeed, young ladies,’ she said, ‘I would do a great deal to support the King, honest man, but as to giving you my mistress’s best damask table-cloth, with the hen and chickens, to be *flichtering* about on the rails of a French balcony, it is not what I am at all fond of; would not Mrs. Norris be scandalised with such a proceeding, do you not think, and am not I responsible for the napery?’ ”

“ March 15.

“ Papa and Mr. A—— returned last night; they could get no passage in any ship at Marseilles,—all were occupied. Sir H. N—— and his wife gave six hundred pounds to be taken only as far as Gibraltar, where they may be long detained. Papa thinks we have now no way left but to run the risk of proceeding to Bourdeaux. Mrs. A—— and her family mean to do the same; the uncertain state of Italy makes Nice, which was talked of at one time, not a safe place.

The Duke is not expected till to-morrow, Bonaparte has left Lyons, and is advancing, they say, to Paris; but we have no regular intelligence; the couriers have been all stopped by this vile man."

CHAPTER XVIII.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ March 16.

“ THE Duke is expected every moment. We set off to-morrow I can scarce believe it. Nurse has been packing all the morning—everything seems to say we are really going. Mamma looks better, and is in good spirits; she exerts herself so much when anything is to be done, that we are always afraid of her suffering from it. This morning, after breakfast, Madame Aimes came into our room, and after looking for some moments embarrassed and irresolute, she said, ‘ I have not been able to shut my eyes last night for thinking of you all. You are such good and amiable people, I cannot bear you should be

sed upon. Louise, whom you have ended to take charge of Master Charles, is a hless girl—you cannot think how worth-; she was the favourite maid of Pauline, Princess Borghese, but this she concealed you; she was aware you would have no who had resided in such a family; her mistress must have given her the character you received, to get rid of her. Now my t is at ease, since I have told you all this.’ wish very much Madame Aimes had er put her heart at ease, for now it is ssible to get any one in the place of ise, but we are most thankful for the pe we have had, and Mary and I are to charge of little Charles. We have been ig leave of some of our poor friends to— what a scene of woe did every house ent! Men, women, and children weep- and deploring the state of their unhappy try. It was a tedious and sorrowful pilgrimage; for the large, magnificent houses in Cours, once the abodes of a rich nobility, still many of them inhabited by the e people,) are now dreary and desolating, and seemed to-day to be particularly

so : a footman, or even an old woman to open the door at Aix, is a luxury unknown. On knocking, those massive doors of oak seem slowly to open of themselves, and you are admitted into the interior, but see no one. This is managed by a spring attached to the door and communicating with the kitchen. At Madame la B——'s this morning we wandered all over the house without meeting a living being; at last we came to a door over which a piece of rich old tapestry was hung; we knocked, and were desired to enter. Within this apartment sat Madame B——, sheltered from every outward storm, but with the traces of deep anxiety upon her brow; her granddaughter and an old *bonne* were also in the room. Our little friend was stooping over her embroidering frame; she did not look up as we entered, but on hearing the sound of our voices she started from her seat, and throwing herself into Mary's arms, burst into tears."

" ' Poor child ! ' exclaimed the old lady, with much emotion ; ' she is aware that we now probably see you for the last time, and deeply may she grieve to lose such friends ;

besides it recalls to her another parting, for she adores her father, and has scarcely lifted her head since he left us. He is not sanguine now as to the result of this sad business,' and she glanced her eye towards a letter which lay beside her, and over which she evidently had been shedding tears. 'I heard from my son this morning,' she continued; 'he seems to have great fears that Bonaparte will be allowed to advance on Paris; he says that treason is abroad. Oh! *mon Roi!*' she exclaimed, clasping her hands, 'for what are you reserved? Have I been spared only to see another royal head brought to the fatal guillotine?—is the blood of our sons again to flow over the flowery fields of Provence?—is the usurper once more to rule with an iron rod over our much-loved land? Forgive me, my dear young friends,' she said, turning to where Mary and I were seated; 'forgive me for adding to the terror you already must feel. Alas! alas! that you are about to leave us; and alas for the unhappy cause!'

"Poor Madame la B——! her conversation certainly did not tend to raise our spirits.

She has seen and suffered much, and it is sad to think that the serenity of her latter years should be thus destroyed. She shed many tears over us at parting, and blessed us in a very impressive manner; and as to Thérèse, she was in a state of agitation it was painful to witness.

“ Our next visit was to the Marquise de R——. We were afraid to mention Jules, but she seemed to be consoling herself in his absence by washing a pair of silk-stockings; they were hung over the back of a chair by the fire to dry, and in the figure before us, in a short white bed-gown, over a coloured petticoat, and in the night-cap in which she had evidently slept, bound with a scarlet ribbon, it was difficult to recognise the elegant Marquise de R——, whom we had admired so much in public; yet elegant she still was—her curtseys were as graceful as ever, and she did not seem the least annoyed by our intrusion. An old Abbé was pottering about the fire, cooking some savoury stew in an earthen pipkin, and on a table in a corner of the bed-room stood a splendid display of silver candlesticks, with their wax-

lights fringed round with coloured paper—those very lights, probably, which had been prepared for the concert before mentioned. Even the Marquise's lively spirits were completely subdued when we took leave of her, and she repeatedly exclaimed as we were quitting the room—‘Alas, alas! in what a state do you leave us. Oh miserable France!’ We paid several other visits, but it is painful to describe the grief of the poor people—all their former sufferings seem now perpetually present to them—and sad were the details they gave us of what they had suffered.

“On our return home we found nurse still full of the escape we had made in not having Louise to accompany us. ‘Was it not a special providence,’ she said, ‘that forced Madame Aimes to speak out at the last moment? Only think, young ladies, of Master Charles being exposed to such company. John misdoubted this pretty Miss Louise from the very first moment he saw her enter the house; she never lifted up her eyes, he says, while she stood in the room before your papa and mamma; but it was a very different

thing as she passed through the nursery—there she went sailing on with her head in the air, and with a perfect want of proper respect, both to Mr. Charles and to me. For my part, I thought little good could come of such a bonnet; and speaking a language too, which I am sure it is my astonishment how any mortal being can make sense of. How was I to make her understand my plan of education for Master Charles? You know, young ladies, it is not my way to be constantly saying, Don't touch this, and don't touch that. When I wish Master Charles not to touch a thing, I put it out of his reach; it is a bad plan with children, that *gammering* way—keeping constantly speak, speaking; they get used to your voice—it makes no manner of impression on them—just goes in at one ear, and out at the other. No, I say very little to him about what he is to do, and what he is not to do—I *conter* him as little as possible, for he is a good child when he is not *contered*, and contradiction is not a good thing for any temper; but above all things I never speak to him when he is in a passion: when I see him stamping

about the nursery, not knowing what to do with himself for anger, I take no manner of notice, till I see him slinking down on his little stool at my side; and then, when I think it would be a relief to his mind to hear mention of it, I open the subject with him, and we discourse together about it in a friendly way.'

"I hope you approve of nurse's mode of education; I can assure you our little Charles is no bad specimen of the success of her plan: but I must write no more journal to-day, for there is yet much to be done in the packing way. The Duke—the Duke!—they say he is entering the town, and there is a joyful shouting."

"Three o'clock.

"He has just passed our windows. Alas, alas, Emily! it was a sad and an affecting sight. He got out of his carriage at the entrance of the town, and rode twice through the Cours on horseback, followed by his attendants. The inhabitants, who were in crowds on each side the street, shouted '*Vive le Roi!*' '*Vive les Bourbons!*' but the troops

who lined each side of the road, remained perfectly silent, and never lifted their caps. The poor Duke stooped repeatedly down, and spoke to the soldiers as he passed, but they gave no sign. If tears and prayers could have availed, he would no longer have been unhappy—our hearts were broken with the sight. We shouted ‘*Vive le Roi!*’ so loud from the balcony, that the Duke heard us, looked up, and bowed. He did not stop at Aix, as was expected, but proceeded straight to Marseilles; but he sent one of his attendants to say, that he had distinguished the voices of the English ladies as he passed, and deeply felt the interest they took in his affairs. I must have done—I can scarcely believe I am writing to you from Aix for the last time, and that we shall probably never see again our kind friends. Oh, there are many good and amiable people here—much cause have we to say so. I am glad to go, and yet I am sorry. Mary is on her knees packing a trunk, and the tears running over her face. I think her voice was even louder than mine when the Duke passed; even little Charles shouted ‘*Vive le Roi!*’

from the balcony, at the very top of his voice."

" Organ, Friday night, March 17.

" We left Aix this morning at eight o'clock. We all felt relieved to get away, we were so distressed with the grief of the poor people. We never expected to have been so sorry to quit Aix, but to leave those who have been so kind to us, at such a moment, is very sad. Many of our friends came to see us again last night. They were much affected in taking leave; their spirits are so low with the state of their unhappy country. Poor old Monsieur M—— gave us a sad account of his wife's sufferings. We had not courage to take leave of her yesterday, for we supposed she would be in much excitement. Madame M—— was one of the very first to visit us, when we came to Aix. Suddenly, during this visit, she got up and began walking violently, or rather running round the room. Mamma was quite alarmed, but Monsieur M—— said, ' Take no notice, I entreat you, Madam, it is merely a nervous affection she is subject to,' and the conversation con-

tinued as before. When we went to return this visit, we were shown into a dark room, and had it not been for the uncertain light of a wood fire, we should not have been able to discover Madame M——, who was seated in an arm-chair, employed in knitting. Several figures kept flitting about the apartment, probably servants of the house, but we could not make out who or what they were. We were afterwards told that this poor lady had an enthusiastic love for the English, and had left her melancholy room, for the first time for many years, to visit us.

“During the revolution, this unfortunate woman had one morning been forced out of bed, and carried to the window, to behold the execution of her father and mother before the door of their own house. Was it wonderful that she should ever more hate the light of day, or that Monsieur M—— should weep over us at parting, saying we were happy to be English.

“Poor Madame Aimes was in a flood of tears this morning, and Madeline and the old woman kept wringing their hands, and walking about the room, the old woman drying her

yes with the cloth with which she had been rubbing the grate, which at every new wipe left a black streak, and made her look infinitely hideous; yet we were too sorry to laugh, and are glad the parting with them is over. Monsieur la B—— was to return to Aix this very day; he will have a sad heart when he hears we are gone. We have left little presents for his family, and a letter and seal for him. His clerk came to see us last night. ‘My poor master!’ he exclaimed; he will tear his hair.’ Kind, excellent Monsieur la B——, we shall keep our promise, and look often on the map he gave us at *a belle Provence*; but with what feelings we shall look at it, the result of this journey alone can determine. Mrs. A—— and her family also left Aix this morning; but they are all well, and are able to proceed quickly by post. We must go by slow journeys, however great the risk of delay. All the people we met to-day had a gloomy, disturbed look. It was very affecting to hear papa, when he read prayers to us this morning, imploring the protecting care of Heaven over this unhappy land. He prayed also for dear mamma,

and it seems as if his prayers were answered, for she has borne this day's journey much better than we could have hoped. The poor little baby still cries a great deal—Mary is holding it now, while nurse is arranging our rooms. Our landlord is fat and uncivil, his daughter pretty, but too fine a lady to be of use, and five or six old women have been into our sitting-room to look at us—but no one offers to be of service; they seem not to care whether we go or stay. I need say nothing of the country we have passed to-day; we saw nothing after we left the valley of Aix but fields of stones. The weather is lovely and warm as in June. We have travelled only thirty-eight miles.

CHAPTER XIX.

“ Nismes, Saturday night, March 18.

At six o'clock this morning we left Organ, weather warm and bright. At Tarascon crossed the Rhone, on rather a dangerous bridge of boats, and breakfasted at Beaucaire, a miserable inn, where we could get nothing to eat. The girl who attended us was cold and gloomy; and there was only fish for breakfast. I mention these little things that may bring the picture of the inns towards my mind. They expected the Duke d'Angoulême to pass every moment, he did not arrive while we remained; we were sorry not to have witnessed his reception, but fear it would not be favourable.

At Beaucaire the Rhone divides Provence from Languedoc. What we have seen of the country to-day has disappointed us much; round Beaucaire there is a very extensive plain of olive-trees, which looked dry and dusty. As we advanced we saw large vineyards, and a good deal of wheat, and now and then almond-trees in blossom; but the ground was uniformly flat; no water, except one very small lake, devoid of all beauty: most of the fields were fenced by very large flag-stones, set up on edge—and this is Languedoc! I am at a loss to say what should be done to Mrs. Radcliffe—every turn of the wheel seemed but to dispel some bright illusion. Within a few miles of Nismes we saw numberless groups of peasants who were watching for the arrival of their prince; the road was strewn with white lilies, and the young girls had their laps filled with flowers. As we passed, they shouted ‘*Vive le Roi!*’ ‘*Vive les Bourbons!*’ and we were not silent. Mary and I were quite impatient to get out of the carriage, and papa allowed us to walk part of the way, as we were going but at a snail’s pace. We found several bunches of

lilies, and would have been glad if the prince had passed while we were strewing them on the ground. A group of peasants advanced to us, headed by a very lovely young girl; she stepped forward, and throwing out her arms, shouted ‘ *Les Bourbons pour jamais !* ’ Never shall we forget the expression of that girl’s face—what a loyal heart beamed in her bright blue eyes ! We arrived here at the Hotel de Louvre at six o’clock, and the prince entered the town an hour after. All the country we have passed since leaving Beaucaire seems most loyally disposed, and the white flag is flying from every window ; but the courier from Paris has not been allowed to come in here for three days, and we are most anxious for intelligence. Mamma is pretty well, and the baby has slept a great deal, and cried much less to-day—nurse manages it nicely ; she now takes her place in the coach with us, and papa has joined Mr. Maitland in his carriage. We get on very comfortably, and though our progress is slow, we are most thankful to think we have now got two days’ journey safely over. We have made out to-day only thirty-four miles.”

“ Montpellier, Monday, March 20.

“ At six yesterday morning we quitted Nismes, after having passed a most uncomfortable night. I need not enter into particulars, but will only say, that we preferred lying on the floor to continuing in bed—so got up, dressed ourselves in the dark, and lay down on the brick-floor, with our night bags for pillows; but sleep was out of the question, and we had not shut our eyes when we were called up at four o'clock to prepare for our journey—the heat being so great at present that we cannot travel in the middle of the day. We saw a great many officers on the parade, at that early hour, expecting the prince. We passed a Roman amphitheatre, the half of which is still entire, and were sorry papa had no time to stop and examine it more closely, or to visit the celebrated Maison Carrée. The country around Nismes is not at all pretty,—flat and uninteresting; and all we have seen of Languedoc as yet, has been the same extensive fields of wheat and plantations of olive, and now and then a vineyard; but no fine rivers, no fine trees, and no variety of ground: above all,

the sound of no distant sabbath-bell, nor well-dressed peasant journeying to the village church. Many of the houses we saw as we travelled on seemed in better repair; but still the same want of taste. White-washed walls, orange borders round the windows, and green shutters;—some had creeping plants around them, but they generally were trailing on the ground;—everything looked disorderly and neglected. We passed one small house on an entire flat—no beauty of situation—but it was newly built, and looked neat and clean. We all praised it—we were glad to get anything to praise. ‘Now that’s pretty, Master Charles,’ nurse exclaimed; ‘that’s like one of the weavers’ boxes near Glasgow. Alas, alas! for Languedoc. Then, Emily, there have been no gorgeous sun-sets; no, the orb of day has not tinged the evening sky with golden light. We have had mornings of sultry heat, and grey evenings—how can I write an interesting journal under such circumstances? But as we approached Montpellier the country certainly did greatly improve; the ground is more varied, the fields and meadows of a richer green; a distant

range of hills closes in the view, and the olive-trees are larger and more luxuriant. Near the town the country is divided into small nursery-gardens, which, although far inferior to those around London, give an unusual richness to the landscape. As the town is full of troops, we have got poor accommodation. We are in the Hotel de petit Paris: it is a dirty house as can be, but the landlord is civil, and seems loyally disposed, so we feel more comfortable here; and as mamma is fatigued, we are to remain all day, and not proceed till to-morrow. We are going out now to walk with papa and Mr. Maitland; for though we arrived here at an early hour yesterday, we did not walk out—we remained at the hotel all the evening, and papa read aloud the service to us.

“ There has no courier arrived here from Paris for four days; this looks very bad. When we stopped at the hotel last night, an English maid stepped up and offered to hold the child while nurse carried in our things. To hear an English tongue again put nurse in a perfect transport; they had a long talk together, and the maid returned at night with

boiled bread and milk for the baby;—the poor baby's delicate appearance creates an interest with every one. She is with a Mr. S——, who has been here with his family for a month or two—all the other English have left Montpelier; he has been prevented doing so by illness, but he also sets out to-morrow.

“ Monday night, March 20.

“ This has been an extremely warm day, as warm as we ever felt it in August; we have, however, been able to see a good deal of the town. Montpelier is situated on a hill; the streets are not nearly so clean as Aix, and are narrow, dusty, and disagreeable. A good many of the houses are newly built, and look more comfortable than the houses generally do in the French towns; but there is no street here like the Cours at Aix—it seems a bustling place, with a number of low, vulgar-looking people: we felt happy we had not settled here. At each end of the town, however, there is a very fine promenade—the Peyrose and the Esplanade: the Peyrose is magnificent—it is a superb platform, which

forms the termination of the grand aqueduct built by Louis XIV., and commands a fine extent of country; in front, the eye rests on a long and level line of the Mediterranean, to the south-west the horizon is formed by the ridge of the Pyrenees, while to the north the view is closed in by the distant, yet magnificent summits of the Alps—the ground below, extending almost to the shores of the Mediterranean, is spotted over with innumerable country-seats, which seen at a distance somewhat resemble those in England. At the termination of this platform is a Grecian temple, inclosing a basin, which receives a large body of water conveyed by the aqueduct, and which empties itself again into a larger basin, with a bottom of golden-coloured sand; the beautiful clearness of this water is beyond description, and the air blowing over it, from a plain of wheat and olives, has a charming freshness. The Esplanade is also fine, though the view which it commands is not to be compared to that from the Peyrose. On the whole, however, we did not think either view finer than the one from Stirling Castle, and not so fine as that from

Windsor Terrace. I am tired with this long dull story, and I am sure you will be tired also, when you come to read it. Do you like descriptions of country, Emily?—I do not; but in a journal one should describe—it is a necessary thing to do; and yet I do think that it is those constant description of hills, and woods, and rivers, which makes a journal so dull in general. When papa asked one of our French friends at Aix, if he liked the country, his answer was—‘No, I prefer town; in the country it is always *tree, tree, and wife, wife.*’ Don’t you think that in journals it is often too much *tree, tree?* How I should like to know how you are getting on—when shall I see what you have written?—when shall we meet again? Are you also journeying towards that much-loved land? We heard to-day from Mr. S——, that a letter had been received from the Duke d’Angoulême, mentioning that he had accounts from Paris, stating that a plot had been discovered, and Soult and several of the conspirators arrested; it was said the whole royal family had been doomed to be put to death. Oh that their excellent king should reign

over such monsters ! Papa hopes affairs may now take a more favourable turn, but Bonaparte still continues to advance to Paris. We saw to-day the botanical garden where Young buried his daughter ; but I must not go off in another description, besides I am sleepy, and what nurse would call ‘ *a wee dottled.*’ ”

“ Pezenas, Tuesday, March 21.

“ We left Montpellier this morning at six o’clock ; the country around the town, though certainly much finer than we had yet seen in Languedoc, soon became very uninteresting : an extended plain, covered with uninclosed fields of wheat, and occasionally a plantation of olives. Before reaching Maize, a small town situated close to the Mediterranean, we passed through a considerable forest, the only one we had seen in Languedoc. The road wound along the shore, the day was delightfully warm, and the waters of the Mediterranean lay in a perfect calm—clear, still, and beautiful—under the light of a glorious sun. Mary and I got out of the carriage, flew across the field, and were on the beach in a moment ; there was very little beach, but

the sea was of a more lovely blue than we had ever seen it. We picked up a few shells for Aunt Douglas, and were roused from dreams of a distant friend by the sound of papa's voice, calling to us across the field. He had left the carriage in search of us. Of whom were we both thinking, Emily, at that moment?—of whom but your own dear self.

“How Emily Seymour would enjoy this scene!” Mary observed.

“Yes,” I answered, ‘I have just been wishing she could be borne to us on the bosom of that blue wave.’

“Maize is a little fishing-town, quite on the shore. We breakfasted on fish and the largest oysters we had ever seen. The general appearance of the country we have passed to-day is certainly far from fine, but it improves much on coming near Pezenas, where the fields are divided into green meadows, and interspersed with nursery-gardens, in which, although it is now only March, the fruit-trees are in full blossom, and richly beautiful. We saw no flowers in the gardens, and no cows in the meadows; since we left green England we have but once seen cows grazing. Would

that we saw it again ! its fields, and flowers, and grassy plains, I would not give 'for warmer France, nor Ausonia's groves of golden fruitage, and her myrtle bowers.'

“The spring we found much further advanced both at Montpellier and here than at Aix: the hedge rows are quite green, and many of the fields white with the narcissus. The wheat is now in the ear, and the green peas in the gardens a foot and a half high. When we left Aix, only the almond-trees were in blossom ; every thing is as far advanced here as with us in the middle of June. In the forenoon it is so warm that we seldom leave the carriage. Mamma has improved considerably in strength, and last night, for the first time, the baby slept soundly, and has been very good to-day ; on the whole, we get on better than was expected, and as yet we have found the country perfectly quiet ; the people are kept in entire ignorance of all that is passing. We have been the first to mention the intelligence we heard at Montpellier.”

CHAPTER XX.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ Narbonne, Wednesday, March 22.

“ WE were in the carriage this morning at five o'clock, and arrived about half-past nine to breakfast at Beziers. It is a small town, prettily situated on the side of a hill, and the green fields and orchards which surround it give it at a distance a pleasing appearance; but the streets were dirty and disagreeable, and we never should be able to get breakfast at all in the miserable inns we meet with in those small towns, were it not for nurse's worthy little kettle, and her own private exertions. Nurse is never at a loss: without understanding a word of the language, she gets on with the French people quite as well as any of us, always answering their civil speeches in a much longer speech, in good broad

Scotch, but with so much expressive gesture and demonstration, that they often exclaim— ‘What a charming old lady she is ! what a misfortune not to understand her language !’ It was singular that at Aix we only met one gentleman who could talk a little English.

“ After breakfast at Beziers Mary and I accompanied papa to take our places in the *coche d’eau* : the carriage had become rather fatiguing to mamma, and we were told we could go in one of them from Beziers to Toulouse in two days. Our French friends had assured us that they were *superbes*, *magnifiques*, but their ideas are very different from ours. We found a miserable, dirty, close cabin, the air of which, even when empty, was most disagreeable to us ; and as there was no second cabin or deck, we must have been subjected to every kind of low company. It is not at all a proper conveyance for ladies ; besides, we should have been obliged to get up in the night, which would not have done either for mamma or the baby. The boat sets off the first day at eleven, but the second at three in the morning. The

country between Beziers and Narbonne is rather pretty: the fields of green wheat and clover looked refreshing, and hedge-rows of willows inclosed many of the fields. The hills were distant, and did not look so barren as those to which we have lately been accustomed, and for some time we had a view of the Pyrenees rising in the clouds. A good many orchards surround the town of Narbonne, but we could not understand how it should be particularly good for bees, for we did not see a single flower. In the evening we set off to see the cathedral, which is thought fine: as we walked along, about a hundred boys rushed out of school, each blowing a trumpet; they saw us trying to escape the horrid din, upon which they all rushed upon us, the little ones jumping up, that they might blow more loudly in our ears; it was as if all the imps below had been let loose upon us. We fled away, and took refuge in the cathedral. Here a very different scene presented itself: the most perfect stillness reigned within; it was almost dusk, and the different figures kneeling in prayer had a fine effect. Let no one go to the Petit Versailles,

where we are at this moment: the landlord seems mad, and the inn is like one of Mrs. Radcliffe's mysterious ghost-like castles—suites of lofty apartments, almost totally unfurnished—decayed tapestry, tarnished gilding, and numberless small doors opening behind the beds, and in all unexpected places in the wall. The landlord entreated as a favour to be allowed to show Mary and me the garden. He pulled each of us a branch of myrtle and bowing very low presented it, saying it was the flower of love; he then made us remark the roses in bud, and wished he could teach them to blow, that he might offer us roses like ourselves. This is French indeed! but as he seemed to us to be getting more mad at every step, we were glad to retreat into the house. I wish we could close up all these little doors, and we have got so many attendants running about in all directions, that we never look up without seeing an ill-looking man, appearing at some odd corner or another. A very strange-looking woman has entered at this moment, with a box of jewellery, and dice to throw for prizes, and now here comes a musician with

his guitar, (probably a party concerned,) to distract our attention by his strains; but papa does not wish us to have anything to do with either, so the musician is playing and the woman is eloquent in vain. She is telling us that we are throwing away an opportunity of enriching ourselves, which may never occur again through life, and is now leaving the room with a most contemptuous expression of face. You can have no idea how insolent many of the lower ranks are now becoming. The weather continues most lovely, and we are getting on well on the whole, though very slowly.

“Carcasson, Thursday night, March 23.

“We left our haunted-looking castle this morning at six o'clock; our supper last night, which was all we got for dinner, was rather of too aerial a nature for hungry travellers. Our landlord was indignant at only two dishes of meat being ordered—he insisted on being allowed, for the same price, to send up a service of ten dishes. Our supper chiefly consisted of one or two eggs, boiled hard, and cut into all manner of fantastic shapes, and a

few slices of apples and oranges strewed over with sugar. We rose from table hungry and exasperated, but from our landlord we could get nothing but fine speeches; and it was well for us we had no intruders in the night from the numerous little doors around our bed, for in our famished state we could have made but a feeble resistance,—it was just the place for all sorts of ghosts and robbers to have appeared.

“This has also been a day of extreme starvation: we breakfasted at Moux, a miserable place, where we could get nothing to eat; luckily, we carry tea and sugar with us, and we have now got into the way of buying a bottle of milk at some of the villages as we pass: milk we find a very scarce article everywhere, and it is never to be got except early in the morning. It has now become John’s regular task, when we stop at these miserable inns, to arrange our rooms, with nurse’s assistance, light the fire, boil the water for tea, and, in short, do everything for us. The people are uniformly uncivil and unwilling to give us anything, saying constantly, that it is all owing to the English that Bonaparte

has escaped. This very night we have really been quite alarmed. On arriving here, after a day's journey, in which we had suffered much from the heat, we were most anxious to secure accommodation; but the landlady, the moment she discovered us to be English, refused to allow us to enter the house; the landlord and the *fille-de-chambre* were anxious to receive us, but no sooner did we get out of the carriage than this woman became furious; she actually tore her hair with rage, and snatching up a great carving-knife, she shook it at her husband; he seemed, however, accustomed to such scenes, for he kept constantly saying to us, '*Soyez tranquils, soyez tranquils, ce n'est rien que cela.*' Poor man, he came into the sitting-room a little after with the intelligence, that he had put a nice fowl to the fire for our supper; but presently he returned with a woeful face to say that his wife had carried off the fowl, and the mayor of the town was at that moment supping upon it in the kitchen. He afterwards, though not without difficulty, contrived to smuggle some cold meat into our room: unhappy man! he certainly has the worst of it,

but we are extremely hungry. The whole country we have passed through to-day has been ugly, eternal flat fields of wheat,—but how was it possible that in our dissatisfied state, with but half a breakfast, we should see country which was not flat, or discover any trees but willows. Certainly, to-day we have passed neither vines, figs, nor olives, and but a single gentleman's seat. In France, you are seldom refreshed by the sight of a cottage or hut, but the little towns are innumerable. More uninteresting country than we have seen since we entered Languedoc, it is impossible to describe. But I am getting into a complaining tone. I must go and talk to Mr. Maitland—he always puts me in good-humour with everything.”

“Castelnaudrie, Friday night, March 24.

“We did not leave Carcasson till eight o'clock this morning, (mamma being a good deal fatigued,) and consequently it was late before we arrived here, and the town we found full of troops, who, we were told, were mostly disaffected. We stopped at the best-looking inn, but they could not receive

us, and we were obliged to remain in the remise amongst cavalry officers and cavalry horses, for three-quarters of an hour, while papa (who had been suffering violently all day from headache) wandered all over the town in search of accommodation. We were unhappy at the fatigue he was exposed to, and our own situation was not a very pleasant one. Our coachman had left us to warm himself in the house, and the soldiers were constantly passing with lanterns in their hands to supper their horses, which were beside us in the remise. We sat as far back in the carriage as we could to escape observation, but a low, murmuring sound from the baby attracted their attention, and they frequently held their lanterns up, as they passed, to the carriage-window, that they might get a look at our faces. Nurse expostulated in broad Scotch, and we in vain attempted to soothe the baby; it began to cry very bitterly, and the soldiers to make us many rude speeches, before papa returned. It was well they did not understand little Charles, who exclaimed repeatedly, ‘ Nurse,

you no be frightened—I get a sword and kill Bonaparte, if he comes in the carriage.’

“ ‘ My little boy should not wish to kill any one,’ mamma observed; ‘ he should love even those who wish to hurt him.’

“ ‘ But, mamma, Bonaparte bad,—his mamma say to him, Bonaparte, be a good boy, but he no listen—he jump out of the ship, and run away with a big sword to kill a king, and what for I no kill him if nurse is frightened?’

“ In short, mamma found it a difficult business to implant any benevolent feelings in master Charles’s breast with regard to Bonaparte: the image of his rushing through the land with a drawn sword in his hand seemed to have taken a strong hold of his imagination; and whether he considered nurse or the king in most danger, or whose quarrel he meant to avenge, it was not easy to discover. Charles’s affection for nurse is unbounded, and it was indeed a trying hour for him when the baby was finally committed to her care. Mary undertook to reconcile his mind to his misfortune, and thought she had

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perfectly succeeded, when, looking up in her face, he exclaimed, ‘ Little baby stay to-day, and go away to-morrow, and never come back any more.’ Poor Mary was sadly discomposed with this sentence of transportation for life for the infant, after the pathetic appeal she thought she had made to his feelings. Not a moment, she saw, was to be lost in establishing the baby’s rights, and most moving was the picture of helpless infancy which she now set before him ; she spoke of feeble legs which could neither stand nor run, of little helpless fingers which could grasp nothing, of tempting poringers, of boiled bread and milk, standing in hopeless distance on the nursery-table, with no kind friend to forward them to the little mouth. The workings of his face were indescribable, but the boiled bread and milk carried the day ; sliding from Mary’s knee, he sprang to nurse’s side, exclaiming, ‘ Baby stay with you to-day and to-morrow—baby never go away, and I be a good boy, and not cry ;’ and burying his head in her lap, he burst into tears.

“ ‘ God bless his dear heart !’ she exclaimed ; ‘ God bless him ! there’s not ano-

ther young gentleman in France that would have parted with me with such fortitude of mind.'

"We are now in a tolerable inn, and expecting supper; the people are very civil and anxious to please us, which is uncommon and very refreshing. The baby is gone to sleep, and mamma is very *cheery*. I can say nothing favourable of the country we have passed to-day: wheat-fields, ploughed fields, and a few miserable willows; but at one time we had a view for a considerable length of way of the Pyrenees, towering in the clouds, and certainly 'distance lent enchantment to the view,' for the rays of the setting sun gave to their snowy tops hues of a thousand colours;—it was magnificent. The lower ranks in Languedoc are, in general, good-looking; about Montpellier, we saw a great many pretty girls; they wear there very nice little caps of muslin, with a lace border plain across the forehead, and then another border of lace, which stands full out from the face; their caps are, in general, extremely clean, and their whole appearance tidy. The peasants have the same

enormous black beaver hats which they wear in Provence: they are very becoming, and give them, when seated on their asses, and riding to market, a very picturesque appearance—the crown is small, and the rims very large: the rest of their dress consists of a jacket and petticoat of striped worsted stuff; they sit very gracefully on their asses, and are constantly knitting as they ride along. Here the head-dress is not nearly so pretty; the muslin cap is covered with another cap of dark calico, and only the white border seen; in France, the lower ranks and the peasants seem always well-dressed—their shoes and stockings are particularly neat, and their linen beautifully white. We hope, on reaching Toulouse to-morrow, to have intelligence of what is going on—we are at present in complete ignorance, and are most anxious to know if Bonaparte has advanced from Lyons. We have come to-day forty-one miles.”

CHAPTER XXI.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“Toulouse, Saturday night, March 25.

“THIS has been rather an agitating day; we left Castelnaudri this morning before five, and after being some time in the carriage, and trying to admire the country, we fell fast asleep. We were roused by Mr. A——’s voice, and what was our surprise to see him, and his mother, and sisters, and to learn that they were returning back to Carcasson, with the intention of crossing into Spain, and sailing from Barcelona. They told us, that never supposing we could have been so long on our way, they had been in search of us all over Toulouse, and had left a letter for us with their banker, to inform us, that private letters had been received, giving

accounts that Bonaparte was at the gates of Paris—that everything was turning in his favour—and that, as it was well-known that the first step he would take would be to detain the English as prisoners, they were now flying in every direction; such numbers had gone to Bordeaux, that the only four ships which were there would be more than full, and they themselves, Sir H. B—— and his family, and many others, were now on their way to Barcelona. Mrs. A—— and her family were all in health, and therefore travelling was easy to them; but with a baby,* and in mamma's delicate health, turning back and crossing into Spain, papa thought might prove a more difficult undertaking than the other. We all came out of the carriage, and sat down together on the bank by the side of the road; and after papa had talked the matter over with Mr. Maitland, we bid a sorrowful adieu to Mrs. A—— and her family,—they set forward on their way to Barcelona and we to Bourdeaux. Alas! when we do reach it, it will probably only be to be detained there; for the ships mentioned to us must have sailed for England ere now,

and in waiting for others, the danger of being detained altogether will be greatly increased. We have been trying to prevail with Mr. Maitland to push on with John—he then might probably be able to reach Bourdeaux, and to secure a passage before the sailing of the ships; our minds would be much more at ease, if assured of his safety, and it is of the greatest importance that he should reach England soon, as it is now very near the time when the operation on his eyes should be attempted; he is, however, so unwilling to leave us, that I am sure we shall not be able to prevail on him to do so—and, indeed, we scarcely know what most to wish with regard to it. I join the others in urging him to go, but my heart is sinking lest he should consent. Oh, did you but know how cheering his conversation is—it is at all times a support to us. Mary seems much depressed—I think she is very anxious about dear mamma. She is seated now at the window.

“ ‘ Mary, what are you about?’ I said to her a few minutes ago.

“ ‘ I am watching the shining out of the moon, Florence, from behind a cloud, and

experiencing feelings impossible to be described. Alas ! it is the contrast—the perfect harmony of all without—the stars travelling in their quiet courses, and the calm, pale light. How different this peaceful stillness from our unquiet minds !’

“To-morrow is Sunday, and as papa never travels on that day when he can possibly avoid it, we are to remain here all to-morrow, that mamma may rest, for to-night she looks much fatigued.”

“Sunday, 3 o’clock, March 26.

“It is to-morrow, but we did not remain ; here we are now, Scotch, English, and Irish, twenty-nine of us altogether, in an open boat, gliding down the river Garonne, the weather beautiful, and when the baby sleeps all is still and silent around. Our party, most of them invalids, seem exhausted with the bustle of departure, and many of them are now seated, leaning over the boat, with their eyes fixed on the water, as if they could read in its peaceful bosom their future fate. But I cannot tell you at present why we are here, for the baby is awake again, and I must take

it while Mary watches Charles. Nurse was up in the night with mamma, who has been far from well, and she has now fallen fast asleep at the end of the boat."

"Monday, March 27. On the River Garonne.

"When we got up yesterday morning, we expected to have had a day of rest and quietness, and after having read the service, were to have walked out and seen a little of Toulouse: it did not promise much; the country around is flat and insipid, and the streets seemed gloomy and dirty. Mamma was not able to get up to breakfast. As soon as we had finished, we went to her; she looked more languid than usual, and when she told us to desire nurse to take the baby to the other side of the house, that she might not hear it cry, we felt quite afraid that she was feeling seriously unwell; but after prayers were over, and we had read to her for some time, she became much more cheerful. 'Yes,' she exclaimed, as Mary closed the Bible; 'yes, dear girls, our hope, our joy, our trust is here; what though "the heathen rage so furiously together, and the people

imagine a vain thing," the Lord of hosts is with us—the God of Jacob is our refuge.' She talked to us for some time on serious subjects, and we left her to try to get a little sleep. Papa had gone out about eleven o'clock to visit the banker, promising to return and read the service to us; he came back in about half an hour quite breathless. 'Can you get ready to start immediately?' he said; 'the banker tells me a party of invalids are to embark on the Garonne to-day at twelve. They will reach Bourdeaux in two days, quicker than we are able to travel, and with less fatigue. He can get us places in the boat if we can be there immediately.' We flew to mamma's room; she thought no more of sleep; she assured us she was well and able to go; and she had dressed almost before our story was ended. It is well for us that we have now got into the way of taking our flight in half a quarter of a minute, in any sort of conveyance. The good banker had promised to fly down to the river to take our places, while we flew after him, with our trunks and hundred bags. On arriving, a young gentleman came up to us on the river-

side, and asked if we were of Dr. Thomas's party. Nurse called out 'Yes, yes.' He handed us out of the carriage. We had brought men with us to remove our trunks; in a moment we had them all in the boat, and seated ourselves upon them, not a little afraid of Dr. Thomas's arrival, of whose existence we had never heard before. Presently, Dr. Thomas did arrive, an enormous fat man, and followed by half the population of Toulouse; he was followed also by a feather-bed, which they were about to fling into the boat. What with anger and astonishment at the unexpected company he saw before him, he and the feather-bed both landed flat in the bottom of the boat at the same minute. The river-side also presented a most disconsolate picture: there stood a little hunch-backed man, swelling back and breast with rage; next, a poor sick, old lady, rolled up in scarlet, and seated in a sedan chair; then two poor sick, young ladies, leaning on footmen; and the rest of the group was made up of some young, some old, and all angry. Dr. Thomas recovered his feet sooner than his temper; he declared they must have another

boat to themselves, and left us in disgust, but we looked so sorrowful, and were so provokingly civil, and the good banker arrived and took our parts, so that the matter was adjusted, and we all set sail together, tolerably civil, though freezingly cold. The hunchback, however, was sturdy to the last, and totally disappeared. To be sure, nothing but our peculiar situation could at all excuse such an intrusion, and the party have behaved uncommonly well. We are to-day the best friends possible, and we have sweetened them nicely up with prunes and figs,—they really seem to like us now, and we have been planning getting to England together; they seem to wish very much not to part with us. We have been talking over Walter Scott's poems with them this morning: when we said we had passed many days in the country with him, they seemed to think us quite entitled to jump into any boat with or without leave. With Mr. Maitland's enthusiasm they were astonished. 'Yes,' he suddenly exclaimed, 'he is indeed the Shakspeare of our day, touching with a master's hand the spring of human feelings, bind-

ing us still more closely to the land of our fathers, to the

“ Land of brown heath and shaggy wood,
Land of the mountain and the flood.”

Then seating himself by me, he continued, in a low voice, which I alone could hear, ‘ Oh ! what does not that loved land recal, and those dear hills, where, in the fulness of human bliss, I have so often rambled, our Erselie bounding by our side,

“ ‘ Content and careless, like the gay birds
That sung her to repose.’ ”

The heather is still blooming on those dear hills ; the clear brook, so often music to our ear, still ‘ sings its quiet tune ;’ but she with whom I wandered—my guide—my counsellor—my best beloved one,—she is now beyond those earthly joys—she has found a better country, and under brighter suns, and still more cloudless skies—she reaps the fruits of faith, of hope, of immortality.’

“ He raised his sightless eyes to heaven and was silent. Alas, Emily ! are those dear eyes never again to open on this fair world ? —is he never to look upon the face of those

who love him with an affection almost as intense as could be felt by them whom he so deeply mourns? I must try to banish this subject from my mind; I dare not trust myself to think of it. The gentlemen of our party are all very obliging, but none of them interesting, except Mr. G——; he is in very bad health, but is lively, and his manners gentle and pleasing; he is quite a young man, and looks so very sick and helpless, that both Mary and I felt a great wish to be kind to him. We tried several times to speak, but our courage always failed; this morning, however, he mentioned his wife, and talked of the anxiety she must be suffering at such a moment on his account. We soon became friends with him after this; his being deprived of her care in his weak state, gave him immediate interest in our eyes. We slept at Map last night, and happily for our invalids, the inn was close to the river-side; had it not been so, I scarce know how we could have managed. Poor Mrs. M—— is so weak that she is supported all day on deck in the sedan-chair, and in the evening the sailors carry her into the inn. As soon as we arrived, our

gentlemen flew into the kitchen, and seizing upon all the meat and poultry they could find, set about preparing it in various ways—such a boiling, broiling, roasting, as immediately took place!—one of the gentlemen struggling to roast a fowl by means of a string which he had tied to its leg, while others were flying about with stew-pans and frying-pans, stuffing everything into them which came in their way. The people of the house, stupified with our invasion, stood silent spectators of the scene. We made our beds on the floor, (miserable ones they were,) and then set about collecting bread, eggs, &c., to secure, while supper was preparing, a breakfast for next morning. We are completely getting into the way of finding our own living; all are willing to pay even double for what is required, but the people will not give us what is necessary for any payment: they are so uniformly uncivil, that if they have supper for themselves, and milk in the morning for their own coffee, they do not care how we are served. We all supped together—a large, though far from a merry party. We are excellent friends, but the minds of all

are in too much agitation to be amusing. Think of Mary's activity; she got up this morning at four o'clock, and stealing down to the kitchen, before the others of the party were stirring, carried off a pan of milk she found *simmering* on the fire, and brought it in triumph to our room. I fear we shall find it rather insipid to be perfectly honest after this journey."

CHAPTER XXII.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ Tuesday evening, March 28.

Still on the River Garonne.

“ HERE we are yet, far from Bourdeaux ; they tell us now it will be to-morrow night before we reach it : this slow progress is very different from what we were led to expect at first. Papa begins to look very anxious. The baby sleeps much better within these last few days, and little Charles is a dear, good child, and a great favourite with every one on board. Sweet boy ! he knows no care, and his merry little songs are very cheering to us all. We slept last night at Agen ; long before we arrived, the moon was up—a lovely moon, and we sat leaning over the side of the boat,

watching the reflection of the stars as they seemed to sleep in the bosom of the waters. As we walked along the promenade, under the trees which led to the inn, we saw several little cafés lighted up, the figures within apparently discussing the politics of the day, some we thought with gestures of rage, others with those of despair. We had a good way to walk — too far for many of our poor invalids. Mamma leant on Mr. Maitland's arm, and bore the fatigue wonderfully well; she certainly is getting stronger: how grateful should we be for this! Many of the others were quite exhausted before we reached the inn: it was most painful to hear the increased quickness of their breathing. Papa had gone on before, with some of the gentlemen, to secure beds; the two first rooms he got a peep of he secured by locking the doors, and putting the keys in his pocket, and by this means we had tolerable accommodation; but this life is indeed a complete scramble. At the moment we entered the inn, two carriages and four, loaded with English, passed us; we heard they were to start very early in the morning for Bourdeaux. This was alarming

news for us, and papa determined to set off with Mr. F——, one of our party, at three o'clock in the morning, by post, that our chance of getting away might not be lessened by those people arriving before us. We again endeavoured to persuade Mr. Maitland to proceed with him, and to get on board any vessel, (which might be sailing immediately,) without waiting for our arrival, but he would not hear of it. We were very low at first, in setting sail without papa; but how cheering is the influence of early day!—all nature was alive with the spirit of the morning, and nature's voice seemed understood by all; we soon became uncommonly cheerful. Some hours afterwards a boat passed us, and the sailors called out—‘ You may proceed, but the white flag is no longer flying at Bourdeaux; you are prisoners!’ Can this be? It is but too probable, for on the 21st Bonaparte entered Paris, and the unfortunate king retreated a few leagues, followed by his faithful body-guard. How will all this end? Surely it is not possible that this vile usurper will ever again reign over France! That Bonaparte is in Paris we heard last night at

Agen; but these sailors may have deceived us: we are determined not to believe that Bourdeaux has capitulated. No, the birds that are warbling to us as we glide along, and this clear stream, as it flows over the smooth pebbles, are not more free than we are.

“ Had our minds been more at rest, this trip by water would have been enchanting. We are now passing down the river with the utmost rapidity and steadiness; the romantic scenery on either side beautifully reflected on its glassy surface. The banks of the Garonne are indeed in many places lovely,—fine hanging orchards, whose trees in full blossom almost dip into the river. Many small towns and villages are prettily situated, and now and then there is a sweet cottage half hid by trees—not thatched, to be sure, but still more like an English cottage than anything we have seen in France. As our boat glides along, the inhabitants from the villages flock from their doors to gain a view of the English, and the different groups are often very picturesque. I must cease writing, the scene at this moment is so completely beautiful.

The sun is setting in unclouded radiance, pouring a rich flood of purple light on the woodland foot-path. We are passing several cottages half-hid by trees; our sailors are beckoning to their inhabitants, who have placed themselves on the different heights which overhang the river; it is a scene of such peaceful happiness, that it is almost impossible to believe that we are now in the bosom of that devoted country which is experiencing at this moment a frightful revolution. All is now smiling around us, but to-morrow we may be plunged into a sea of troubles.

“ We have had no opportunity of writing to England for some days; the courier had left Toulouse just as we arrived, and it seemed uncertain when another was to be despatched. We shall write from Bourdeaux, but have little hopes of our letters being forwarded. Aunt Douglas is often very nervous, and I fear must now be suffering much anxiety on our account.”

“ Wednesday, March 23. On the river Garonne.

“ We slept last night at Lariolle, a small

town, beautifully situated on the river-side. As papa was no longer with us, and John does not understand the language, Mary and I were obliged to get out of the boat and accompany him on shore to secure our night's lodgings. We followed the other gentlemen, but on seeing them enter the first inn, which was but small, we thought there could be no chance of accommodation for the whole party there, and therefore passed on in search of another. It was late and very dark, and it was odd enough to feel ourselves almost alone in a French town, and at night. A woman in the street directed us to an inn : we entered and asked for lodgings. The woman instantly answered that all her beds were engaged ; seeing us appear in that unexpected way seemed to surprise her not a little. We told her we were in no fear of finding accommodation, and would immediately go to another inn, if she had any objections to receiving us ; but that, as there was a large party following us, she would lose a great deal by it. On hearing this, she immediately showed us a room with three beds, which we secured by locking the door. It was with difficulty that we could

prevail on her to give us another for Mr. Maitland. The house was large, and appeared to us to be empty, yet she looked soured and displeased, and seemed only anxious to get quit of us. We carried off the keys, and returned in search of the others. Alarmed at the length of our absence, they had left the boat, and nurse was shouting aloud for us in the streets, followed by Mr. Maitland, who supported mamma on his arm and led little Charles by the hand. How thankful we felt that we had found a house to shelter them !—The rest of the party did not fare so well, many of them having to go far into the town before they could find accommodation. We were scarcely seated in our room, when the door opened, and four withered old hags entered, each carrying a high long-stalked glass of holy water, which they placed before us.—The landlady seemed to have invited her neighbours to have a view of us. After a scrutiny, which seemed to say they had never in the course of their long lives seen anything half so extraordinary, they left the room, but we did not lose sight of them : a large hole in the floor of our apart-

ment gave us still a view of the old hags seated round a blazing wood fire. In a few minutes, our attention was again excited by an increasing sound of voices, and we saw that three men had joined the party, and the old women seemed, all four at once, to be relating to them the history of our unexpected appearance. Mr. Maitland had gone to his room : presently we heard these men ascending the stairs ; and entering our apartment without ceremony, they demanded our passport. We showed it, and they then said they must take it away to have it further inspected. After a little hesitation, mamma gave it to them ; but when she saw our precious passport fairly in the pocket of one of those ugly-looking men, she became alarmed lest there should be some treachery in this—so looking as composed as possible, she begged the man to have the goodness to allow her to look at the paper again for a single moment. He gave it her. She then said that though he might mean us a kindness by taking charge of having it inspected, he must be sensible that our situation at such a time would be a most awkward one were any accident to be-

fall our passport ; she therefore would not again trust it in his hands, but the gentleman in the next room would go with him wherever it was necessary to have it inspected. When he found mamma perfectly determined, and saw me tying on my bonnet to accompany Mr. Maitland, he said that it was at the very extremity of the town, that the young lady could not walk so far, and that he only wished to save us trouble, and prevent our being disturbed in the night. All his eloquence only strengthened our suspicions, and we got them out of the room at last, telling them we preferred being called up at any hour of the night, rather than trust our passport to any human being. We began to breathe freely again, and to think of supper, but presently our persecutor returned, followed by the landlady, who assured us we might trust this man with our passport as safely as herself ; he was her near neighbour ; he was a man who managed everything for her. Her recommendation had no effect : we continued firm ; but we felt the result of her anger in the miserable supper she brought us up. With no dinner, and two hours of

expectation, it was indeed but poor fare. Mamma continued to sit up for some time, expecting the police to inspect our passport, but no one appeared, and as she was much fatigued, we prevailed on her to go to bed. We continued up for some time longer, but as the night wore on, and no one made their appearance, we also undressed, and were just stepping into bed, when we were startled by a loud knocking at our door: we threw on our dressing-gowns, and received in our night-caps an officer of police, followed by four soldiers with bayonets. With outward composure, but inward fear, we produced our passport; they were civil, but took a peep into the beds as they retreated, and we were most thankful to get them out of the room. Mamma was a good deal alarmed at first, but was also considerably amused by our extreme politeness, and the beautiful curtseys Mary and I were making to them in our night-dresses. The whole scene at this house was extraordinary; we rather think it was not an inn, after all, that we got into; there were no men living in the house, and there was no getting the old women for a

moment out of the room, they seemed to regard us with such astonishment—they had never seen English before. It would have amused you could you have seen the expression of nurse's face when we told her this, and the shrug of her shoulders, as she exclaimed, 'Ah ! poor old creatures, and to think they should have come to this time of life with such a disadvantage. Never saw English before, it's no possible !' She certainly seemed to think it little less than a miracle that they should have survived their youthful bloom under such circumstances. How impossible it is to combat early prejudice in the lower ranks : nurse is in many respects a superior person, but it is in vain we remonstrate with her on the injustice of condemning a whole nation, and repeat to her all Monsieur la B——'s most striking anecdotes of the devoted heroism which many of them showed during the revolution. She listens ; but it always ends by her saying, 'Well, young ladies, it may be all very true ; but they *are* French ; and all the tutoring in the world will never make them either Scotch or English ; they will go bow, bowing on to the

end of the chapter ; they will make a bow and a palaver to the very man that's going to chop their heads off. Surely there's no *rationality* in that.' I have been trying, while writing to you, to occupy my mind with other subjects, but it will not do. In a few hours, they tell us, we shall reach Bourdeaux : it is impossible to describe our sensations ; at one moment they are those of hope, almost of happiness ; in the next, feelings of sickening incertitude more depressing than the reality of the evil we dread. Are we prisoners ? Oh with what anxiety shall we strain our eyes for the first sight of the Pavilion ! it is from thence, they tell us, we shall see the white flag, if it is still flying at Bourdeaux."

" Bourdeaux, Thursday, March 30.

" We arrived here yesterday about five in the morning. What was our ecstasy to see the white flag still floating in the clear blue sky ! The Duchess d'Angoulême herself could not have watched it waving in the breeze with more enthusiasm than we did. It was indeed a moment of delight and gratitude : every countenance beamed with joy, and a

bright flush for a moment overspread Mrs. M——'s pale face, as she exclaimed—'God be praised for his infinite mercy, I may yet live to see England again!' You will not wonder, Emily, that from this blessed sight I should instantly turn to Mr. Maitland, and almost weep to think that amongst all the happy group, he alone could not look upon the emblem of our safety. He seemed to understand my feelings, for taking my hand in his, he whispered, 'Florence, dear Florence! let us lift our eyes beyond this symbol of man's invention; let us raise our hearts to Him whose protecting arm is around us, and who has poured balm into the wounded spirit, and strengthened the feeble knees.'

"The appearance of the town from the river was beautiful, but our eyes were instantly bent on the quay, and in the crowd assembled there we were vainly endeavouring to discover papa, long before it was possible we could do so. Our anxiety increased at every moment: repeatedly we thought we had descried him, and repeatedly were we disappointed.

" 'I am sure, quite sure, I see him now,'

Mary exclaimed. 'Oh! if he would but turn round.' The person on whom she had fixed her eager gaze did turn, and the countenance of a stranger met her view.

" 'Be patient, my dear girls! your papa could not know the exact time in which the boat would arrive,' observed mamma; 'and now compose yourselves, and don't be in too great a hurry in landing. Florence, I need not remind you not to leave Mr. Maitland for a moment, and, Mary, I trust to your arm. John will assist nurse with the children.'

"She spoke with perfect composure, yet we could easily see that she shared in no small degree our anxiety and disappointment. Neither was, however, of long duration: just as we were about to leave the boat, little Charles clapped his hands joyfully together, exclaiming, 'Papa! papa!' and sure enough it was his own dear self hastening towards us, and the first look of his face said there was good news for us. Oh it was indeed a happy moment! He told us he had found one cabin in a merchant's ship still vacant, for which they asked at first 200%. but afterwards came down to 130%; fortunately for us, Mr.

F—— had thought the price too high, and papa, thinking there was no time to be lost, had engaged it instantly for us. We are to furnish our own provision, so that the demand for passage money is still very high; but we must have given double had it been asked, for there was no alternative. Having procured carriages on the quay, we all set off in most excellent spirits for the Hotel Richelieu, where we now are. We pay five francs a night for each bed, and everything else proportionably high; but the house is an extremely good one, and the cleanness and elegance of everything around us, is most refreshing after what we have been exposed to of late. Delightful indeed is this rest to mind and body! We are fast forgetting all our troubles. Mamma is better, the baby thriving, little Charles as good as good can be, and we have got a passage in a merchant's ship. What more could we desire? Be this ship what it may, will it not appear a paradise to us? The sea alone divides us from all we love, and the sea is far less formidable to us than the land we are leaving. As soon as it was known that we had secured a cabin, we

had applications from several of our boat-companions. Four of the ladies were anxious to join our party; this papa thought far too great an addition, and two of them are great invalids; but as they are quite unprotected and in a strange land, he felt it his duty to do all he could for them at such a moment; he has, therefore, promised them three of our beds, and Mary and I are to sleep on the floor.

“ Bourdeaux is a most beautiful town; the streets are broad, and the houses large and magnificent, with fine verandahs; the nursery-gardens around resemble more those in England than anything we have seen in France, and the vineyards are in high order—the vines beautifully trained, forming arches, and hanging in rich festoons. With friends, one could be very happy here, all looks so flourishing. A few minutes ago we were called to the window to see the Duchess d'Angoulême pass in the open carriage: her poor afflicted heart would still be gratified by seeing the white flag flying from every window, and hearing loud and repeated shouts of ‘ *Vive le Roi ! vive notre chère Princesse !* ’ The people

here seem extremely loyal; to-day the national guard gave a dinner to the troops of the line; they are at this moment going hand-in-hand through the streets, and the shout of '*Vive le Roi!*' never for a moment ceases. Heaven grant they may continue steady to their king! Bonaparte has sent his orders and addresses here, but the civil authorities have put his couriers in prison, and sworn to continue faithful to the cause of royalty."

"Bordeaux, Friday, March 31, twelve o'clock. .

"We went into lodgings this morning close to the hotel, as we are not to sail for a few days, we found our first abode too expensive. John has been despatched to Polliac, a small village close to where the ship is lying, to make inquiries as to what stores, &c., we shall require. We expect him back to-morrow night, and must then set about our preparations. There is a great stillness in the town to-day; no longer shouting and rejoicing, the people look melancholy and mysterious. Mary and I have been out with papa, making some small purchases; he did

not like the appearance of things—the shopkeepers did not seem to hear us when we addressed them, or to care whether we bought or not. Mr. M—— has not been able to procure any passage for his family, all the ships are full, and poor Mrs. M—— is so weak now, that it is not probable she could reach England alive.”

“ Friday, six o'clock.

“ Papa came into the room about an hour ago, and from the expression of his face we felt assured something was wrong; he looked disturbed and anxious, and soon we were made partakers of his anxiety. He told us we must be ready to leave Bourdeaux by six o'clock to-morrow morning, as we are not now safe for an hour longer. The fort yesterday declared for Bonaparte, and General Clausel, who, we heard this morning, was on his march, is now without the walls, and at this moment an engagement has taken place, but it is thought that Clausel's troops will speedily make good their entrance. The drafts we expected have not arrived, but Mr. Johnston, an English merchant here, has

most kindly lent us money. We must now trust to getting our ship stores at Polliac. How fortunate our ship went below the fort of Blaye the day before it declared in favour of Bonaparte—it would otherwise have been seized. We were to have gone down by water to the ship, but this morning a party of English, in going down, were fired on from the fort, their baggage pillaged, and themselves taken prisoners. We are far from safe even by land, yet we do not feel at all afraid; I believe it is for want of time, for all is bustle and confusion. I am writing while they are at tea, but we must now go and pack our trunks. We hear the Duchess is immediately to leave Bourdeaux. Did ever misfortunes equal hers? We are anxiously wishing she may go to-night—to-morrow she may not have it in her power.”

CHAPTER XXIII.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ Monday, 3rd of April. On board the William Sibbald, at the mouth of the river Garonne.

THANK God for his infinite mercy, we are now on board an English ship, all safe, and on our way to our own dear land. As I am now very sick, I must try to recollect what has passed within these last two days—these days, Emily, as I trust we shall never see again. It was the middle of the night, rather Saturday morning, before Mary and I had finished packing up, and we had scarcely got into bed, and were half asleep, when we were startled by a loud knocking at the street-door; and when we immediately afterwards heard loud voices in papa’s room, we never doubted, but that we were arrested.

Presently, heavy footsteps approached our door.

“ ‘ We are prisoners,’ Mary exclaimed, but in a very brave, steady voice.

“ With a loud thunder against our door, we were desired in a rough man’s voice to get up.

“ ‘ Get up instantly,’ he said ; ‘ get up, ladies, or you will be made prisoners ; I am the muleteer ; we must be off without delay, if you mean to be off at all. All is confusion in the town, already they have begun to set fire to the houses.’

“ We were dressed in a moment, and the first news we heard was, that after a very few shots had been fired the town had capitulated. Oh, they are a poor dastardly set ; all their protestations, all their vows of fidelity, were in one moment forgotten ;—miserable people ! We got into the carriage, I scarce know how, but it seemed the work of a moment. Our landlady, like a true Bonapartist, took advantage of our situation, and although we had taken our lodgings by the night only, and had given her warning the day before, insisted on our paying the week, and threat-

ened to get us stopped if we refused. Glad to flee away, we payed her everything she demanded, and it was well we did ; had we been delayed an hour longer, we should not have got away at all. The troops of General Clausel were in the town when we left it, several of the merchants' houses had been set on fire, and the inhabitants put to death in attempting to defend their property. Mr. Drew, the owner of the ship, was to have sailed with us, but he delayed setting out till two hours after we did, and was put in prison.

“ The road was dreadfully heavy to Polliac—deep sand ; we advanced at a very slow pace ; about half-way, we stopped at a small inn to refresh our horses, and there we found the *préfet* of Bourdeaux in disguise, making the best of his way to the ships. He told us he had been down on his knees to the Duchess to go down to Polliac, and get on board the English frigate, and at last he had prevailed ; he had sent her post-horses before setting out himself, and expected her anxiously every moment ; but he seemed to think her being allowed to leave the town very doubtful. He gave us a most affecting

account of the dignified and impressive manner in which she yesterday harangued the troops. We had seen her pass our windows, and the stillness around her struck a cold chill to our hearts, for no longer did loyal signs or sounds greet her by the way—her efforts were vain; before she returned, her only care was to prevent the national guard from making a useless resistance. As we proceeded on our journey, we passed the Château de Marco; the Marquis, who was watching on the road with his daughter, rushed up to the carriage, exclaiming, ‘Where is the Duchess? why does she not come? she must be concealed in my house till it is night; there are troops stationed at a league’s distance to prevent her escape.’ Then seeing mamma’s fair complexion, he exclaimed, ‘It is the Princess—it is herself. Ah, why have you no *avant garde*? no disguise can conceal you. You must not proceed.’

“The poor man was almost frantic; the tears were rushing down his cheeks; never did I see any one in such agitation. It was a considerable time before we could unde-

ceive him, and his assurances that we should be stopped by the troops, if we attempted to proceed, afforded us no very cheering prospect as we continued our journey. For some time Mary and I lay with our heads out of the carriage-window, expecting to see the soldiers every moment. Suddenly we did see them at a distance, stationed on a bridge, and the sun glancing on their arms; to describe that moment is impossible, for never did I experience anything at all resembling it. A quickly-succeeding ray of common sense, however, assured us they were woodmen with their hatchets—quiet, peaceable, loyal woodmen—watching for the Princess. Never before had their heroic deeds inspired such terror. We proceeded, and saw nothing more alarming, and our anxiety for the Duchess increased in proportion as our own safety became less doubtful.

“About seven o’clock in the evening we came in sight of Polliac, and saw with delight an English frigate and several merchantmen in the river. When we stopped to inquire for an inn, several English sailors came up to us—fine fellows they were; one exclaimed,

‘ If you have got no berths, ladies, come on board the frigate, and welcome ; our captain has orders to provide for every one.’

“ Another called out, ‘ Quick, down to the beach, and we will lend you a hand with the luggage, and with your young travellers, God bless their little hearts ! We only wait for the Duchess to set sail.’

“ It would have been well for us if these brave fellows had remained a few minutes longer. Our muleteer, not finding it easy to procure an inn for us, contented himself with getting accommodation for his horses, and began to unharness them with the intention of leaving us in the street. Papa told him if he did not drive us to an inn he should have no money for himself ; he gave a most impertinent answer, and refused to obey : it was getting dark, and had begun to rain. We knew not where to go, and although we got two porters to carry our trunks, what was to become of all our small things ? When this insolent wretch had turned all our writing-desks, parcels, and baskets, into the street, we came out of the carriage to stand watch over them, as by that time a crowd of black-

guards had collected around us. The muletter then desired to be paid before he would allow the porters to touch our trunks, and, instead of eighty francs, for which we had agreed, he demanded a hundred. It was in vain papa protested that he had settled with his master for eighty, and had already paid one-half; he seated himself upon our trunks, and declared none of us should stir, were it the whole night, till we had paid the money. By this time one or two Englishmen had mingled with the crowd; they warmly took our part, but what was to be done? he was an immensely tall, strong man, and he had brought from Bourdeaux a companion as strong and fully as insolent as himself. It was now getting dark, and raining heavily, and the Englishmen joined with us in entreating papa to pay him everything he asked, rather than continue longer in the street: terror for mamma, suffering from this agitation, induced him to comply; and no sooner had he given the money to this wretch, than the Englishmen giving our trunks to the porters, and loading themselves with our parcels and baskets, desired us to follow. Each one of-

ferred to give up his bed, but all were in different quarters of the town—and what was one bed amongst so many?

“ At the first house we stopped, we could find no accommodation; we went on to another, where our trunks had been deposited: here there was only room for our trunks, none for ourselves, so taking out our night-things, we proceeded on our weary way. The rain increased, the night was getting very dark, and mamma’s fatigue was becoming every moment more apparent in her languid step. At last we succeeded in getting a night’s quarters in a farm-house outside the village. One of the Englishmen who had preceded us a little way came back with this cheering intelligence, but just as we were about to enter, a loose stone on the road turned under papa’s foot; he was assisting mamma at the moment, and in endeavouring to regain his balance, his foot bent under him, and he sprained his ankle violently: he was supported into the house—warm vinegar was instantly applied—but the whole foot soon became much swelled and inflamed, and we could easily see he was suffering intense

pain. We stood a melancholy group around him. Mamma's increased paleness, and Mr. Maitland's look of silent despair, were very touching; but papa soon rallied and cheered us all.

“ ‘ This is unlucky certainly—very unlucky,’ he said, turning to mamma; ‘ and John’s absence at this moment is particularly unfortunate. I fear the poor fellow has gone back to Bourdeaux in search of us; but still we must not allow ourselves to be cast down with these untoward circumstances; we shall still get on very well, I have no doubt;—have we not our dear girls to assist us? Now for my quiet Mary’s prudent little head, and our Florence’s activity:—go, dears, to nurse, and consult with her as to what stores can be procured for our voyage. I am anxious your mamma should go instantly to bed—she has gone through so much fatigue to-day.’

“ He dismissed us with his blessing, and to nurse we immediately proceeded; but she, poor woman, we soon found, had also her share of evils to contend with: both the children had caught cold by being so long exposed in the rain, and, as she expressed it, she was

demented between them, for to put either of them to sleep was beyond her power. The master of the house seemed inclined to be very civil, but his wife was a perfect fury: she was enraged at our making an inn of her house, and her two daughters seemed to be fine ladies, who refused to assist us in anything. Before going to bed, we made a list of what was necessary to be got—of eggs, bread, &c. &c., for our sea-stores, and ordered several pieces of meat to be roasted. We had left Bourdeaux in such haste, that there was no time to provide proper mattresses for those that were to lie on the floor, and none were to be found at Polliac. We had, however, three large bags with us which we had made at Bourdeaux, and we ordered the girls to get in straw in the morning to stuff them. Mary and I got up at four: we found no meat put to the fire, no straw for our beds—nothing done—they were not accustomed, they said, to such matters. We began immediately to arrange our stores of bread, eggs, &c. One of the girls advanced to look at us. We asked her to be so good as to butter the eggs for us. ‘Butter them—touch butter

with my fingers!—impossible,’ was this fine lady’s answer; and when we entreated that either of them would get some straw to stuff our mattresses, they declared it was too wet under foot—they could not bear to think of going out. They continued both of them to stand looking at us, and laughing to each other—one of them the whole time before the glass twisting her ringlets round her fingers. Mary, who had been suffering from toothache in the night, remained to boil some bottles of cream into a syrup, while I went out in search of straw. No one would attend to me in the streets—the whole village was in commotion: some were running to meet the Duchess, others flying to the quay; at last I saw a stable-door open, and having persuaded a man who was within to sell me some straw, I hired a little girl in the street to assist me, and we both returned loaded. We then dispatched this same little girl to the baker’s to have the meat roasted in the oven: and as poor nurse had dropped asleep after a night of incessant watching by the little baby, who had become seriously unwell, Mary and I stuffed the mattresses ourselves,

while the two girls continued to stand looking and laughing at us. Meanwhile papa got up; he was quite lame, and suffering much from his ancle; but on finding that the master of the house had already gone out, without offering us any assistance, and that the ship was expected to sail in little less than an hour, he was obliged himself to go in quest of a boat to take us out to the ship: even with the assistance of his stick he could scarcely get on at all, and we were most unhappy about him.

“ The Duchess had not arrived, and we were in a sad state also about her; but soon after papa had left us, we heard a great confusion in the road, and, on running out, we had the comfort of seeing the poor Duchess arrive in safety, after having been concealed the day before in the Château de Marco. Three or four carriages followed with her attendants, and she was escorted by a detachment of the national guard—a most melancholy procession. She herself, though deadly pale, looked perfectly calm, but most of those who accompanied her were drowned in tears. The church was close to where we were

lodged. We heard that while the other ladies had gone down to the frigate, to prepare everything, the Duchess had gone to mass. We could not resist our wish to see her again; and when we thought the service would be nearly over, Mary and I stole into the chapel and placed ourselves near where she must pass. As we entered she was kneeling—her eyes thrown upwards; there was no colour or motion in her lips—she was pale and still as death itself—one could scarce believe she breathed; yet on her countenance there was an expression of that faith and hope, which she was at that moment imploring. May the orphan's prayer be heard in heaven!

“As she rose from her knees to leave the chapel, she observed us much affected; and as she came up to where we stood, she held out her hand to each of us. We then walked with her a little way towards the river side.

“Mary exclaimed, ‘Oh go to England, you will be cherished there.’

“‘Yes, yes,’ she answered, ‘I am going to England.’

“And when I added, that all this would be quickly over, and that when she returned

to France it would be for lasting happiness, she smiled, and replied almost in a cheerful tone of voice—‘ Indeed I do hope it will be so.’ I felt as if my heart would have broken when I heard her voice.

“ Soon after our return to our lodgings, papa came in breathless and exhausted. ‘ I can do no more,’ he said in a most desponding tone. ‘ I can get no boat to hire; and even if we had one, there are no coaches here to carry us to the quay. I am not equal to further exertion, and it now rains so heavily, we shall not be able to prevail on any one here to stir out.’

“ ‘ Did you see nothing of the English ladies who were to accompany us ?’ some one inquired.

“ ‘ Yes, they have been lucky enough to secure a boat,’ papa answered.

“ There was then a chance that we might be able to get with them, and stealing from the room, I wrapped my mantle about me, and once more I flew into the street. I entered several houses, and described the English ladies—no one had seen them. By this time not an English person was left in the

town, and many called out as I flew along, 'You are too late for the ships.' Suddenly I found myself in a room full of French officers, who were seated round a long breakfast table. I told my story, and one of the officers, only half-getting up, answered— 'These ladies are by this time in the ship—I myself accompanied them to a boat ten minutes ago.'

"Where was all my terror of strangers at that moment? Emily, I only remember now that I laid my hand on this officer's arm, and so earnestly entreated him to accompany me to the quay and try and procure a boat, that it was impossible he could refuse: his French politeness was, however, soon exhausted. After walking once or twice up and down the quay, and calling to some of the boatmen, he told me no boats were to be had, and so disappeared, leaving me to my fate. My head was by this time running round; the rain fell in torrents, and the confusion of porters hurrying up and down with the baggage to the different boats, threatened every moment to lay me flat upon the ground. I ran as near the water-edge as I could, and tried to call to

some of the boatmen, but the noise of innumerable voices made the effort vain. At that moment a signal gun was fired from the frigate; the ships were then getting under way; for a moment I stood quite still, leaning against a lamp-post, trying to consider what was best to be done. To get down to the quay seemed our only chance:—if on the spot ourselves, we might get a return boat, and a coach might also be picked up which had conveyed some of the other parties. I flew through several streets, and saw a coach approaching; I called to the man—I would give him whatever hire he liked, to engage for an hour; he said he must return to Bordeaux, and would take no bribe, and drove furiously on. I continued my way, and after passing through several streets, I saw another coach standing empty at the door of a house—a little boy stood gazing at it. I flew up, begged the boy to let down the steps, jumped in, called to the coachman I would give a Napoleon for an hour's hire, and was seated before the astonished man had time to refuse. On we drove, and as we proceeded, I secured porters to carry our trunks; when

I arrived with my coach and my porters, it was a most joyful sight, for they were in a state of anxiety about me which I cannot describe: all now was joy.

“ Our landlord, who was out all the morning, had at last appeared, and had been sent out to secure a boat, which he had happily effected. They had been in despair as to how they were to get to it, but the coach and porters made all easy, and off we set in half a moment; but when we came down to the quay neither our boat nor our boatmen were to be seen. Another, however, offered to take us for a few francs. We had engaged for thirty. When half our baggage was placed in the boat, the first man made his appearance, and, furious at being cheated of the hire, seized the rest of our trunks, and plunged them into his boat. We had not a moment to lose; we paid both, had the baggage once more removed, jumped into the boat, and gained the ship when it was already under way. It was a moment of deep thankfulness, of such delight as made us forget all we had suffered. We were in an English ship, and what could distress us

now? John too we found on board, and his meeting with his dear master was most affecting. On going down to the cabin, however, we saw there were still some distresses in store for us; two of our beds had been sold twice over, and in none of them were there either mattresses or blankets, and the salt-beef, biscuit, and porter, the captain had promised to provide had also been left out of the cargo; indeed the ship came off in such hurry that we are told there is not even sufficient ballast. We have stuffed our flannel gowns and everything we can get hold of, into the berths to make our invalids more comfortable, and Mary and I find the floor sadly hard and cold. I had been but a short time in the cabin the first day before I fainted, from the fatigue and agitation I had gone through; and the first night was dreadful. With lying in my wet clothes all night, I became so stiff next day, I could hardly move. This is now the 5th of April. We have been six days on board, but I am able to write but little at a time, the sickness is so overcoming. We are tossing about with a contrary wind, and not in the direction we

should be : a fortnight of such winds as we have had, they say, will not take us to Plymouth ; indeed, our situation now surpasses everything we have hitherto gone through. We finished our last piece of meat to-day, and our slender stock of provisions is now almost exhausted, for we gave all we could at first to the poor Mayor of Bourdeaux, who is on board with us, and who had no time, in the hurry of his flight, to make preparations of any kind. There is also a young officer on board, who well deserves to share with us. He was one of those who warmly took our part against our unworthy muleteer ; he met *him* again next morning without his companion, and on his being accosted by him in a very rude way, he knocked him down and beat him most heartily. He assures us no bones were broken, and I don't think even Mary was sorry. The frigate and the other ships which sailed when we did left us on the second day. Our ship is a bad sailer. Fortunately we got a cask of water from the frigate, but it is now very low. We have never had our clothes off, except to change them, since we came on board ; and from our position in

the ship, we can only lie on one side. Mary and I are squeezed up between the side of the ship and a table, which is screwed into the middle of the cabin; two of the ladies who lie on the other side of the table are quite as ill off as we are, and poor nurse is worse; she sits up all night on one of the trunks, and holds the poor baby in her arms; and during the day she goes to sleep for some hours in one of the berths, while we take charge of it. Luckily, we have with us some short bits of wax candle, which nurse had put up amongst our things, and these little bits have been of infinite use; she burns them in the night: our care is to renew them for her when necessary—but no one can tell what it costs either of us to lift our sick heads from the ground, and move across the cabin to do so. The side on which we lie is now quite blue and bruised. Oh, never, never, I trust, shall we enter another ship. Yet we are going to England to meet all we love again—and there is sleep, and nourishment, and every blessing, in that hope.

“Poor Count Lynch is now emigrating for the second time, and leaving behind all

that is dear to him in the world. The Duchess has gone to Spain ; after getting on board, she determined to go to Spain, that if affairs turned out ill, her husband might more easily join her there. How anxious we shall be when we get to England to hear of the poor King and the royal family ! All I have written since I came on board has been lying on my back, half-dead with sickness, but though most confusedly expressed, it will serve in happier days to put me in mind of all we have gone through.

“ The captain seems to think it will be a high wind to-night, and we are thinking of our want of ballast,—perhaps heavy hearts will do as well.”

CHAPTER XXIV.

FLORENCE TO EMILY.

“ Friday, April 6.

“ WE have been much amused with a scene which took place in our cabin to-day. When we were yesterday looking rather grave at having finished our last piece of meat, Mrs. B—— cheered us by the assurance, that she had a dinner provided for us for at least one day more. We felt very grateful at the moment, and still more so to-day when we became hungry, and saw her get up and move towards a cupboard to fulfil her promise. A sudden roll of the ship, however, defeated her good intentions, and she was laid prostrate on the ground; in spite of hunger and civi-

lity, we all laughed, and she was very angry ; she gathered herself up, however, reached the cupboard, and having scrambled up on the locker, opened the door—but, oh ! her agitation in falling was nothing to the scream with which she exclaimed, ‘ It is *stolen*, and I know who has done it !’ turning with a look of fury to her niece, who stood trembling before her. It was but too true ; this hungry, greedy girl, had actually got up in the night and privately worried up a Bologna sausage on which we were to have dined. We got no dinner, but we got some amusement, which, though not so nourishing, was fully as unexpected ; but though we are in better spirits to-day from not being so sick, we have nothing else to cheer us. The wind is now falling, and a fog is coming on.”

“ Sunday, April 8.

“ Another night has passed—a long, long night. There was a swell in the sea, and oh ! this sickness, what have we all suffered ! To describe my trembling of heart last night, when I saw the candle sinking, and knew I must cross the cabin (and those lying on the

floor) to renew it,—no! I cannot say what that effort was. With me, sea-sickness is a faintness even unto death—it seems a sinking at every step, of limbs and life itself;—but why should I think of this now, when we are all better? What can I think of. Of the scene before us?—Oh, no! Of our dear home?—Alas! that thought is now, of all others, the most painful. To hear on all sides this constant rumour, that we are sailing in a wrong direction—probably, they say, towards America—and this impenetrable fog continuing, no observation taken for two days! But these are enervating thoughts; is not our sure confidence in Him, who can give us strength equal to our trial? What must the feelings of those be in suffering, who believe not in this Power, nor ask this strength?—their courage in the hour of danger seems a miracle. The poor baby gets so emaciated now, we cannot bear to look at him; but he is not our greatest anxiety. Ah, no! of that I cannot write. I need say nothing of yesterday; the weather was the same as now—a dead calm and dense fog. I am unable to write more, for I

am getting very faint. I sometimes think that want of proper nourishment increases this faintness. Well, if we cannot say, that we are a day's sail nearer our dear home, we may say, at least, we have a day less to suffer, and that of itself is a blessing."

" Wednesday, April 11.

" Four days we have had of calm and fog—four tiresome days, and still more tiresome nights. It was fortunate we were too sick to be hungry, and that a little water-gruel and fruit is sufficient. Yet, sometimes towards evening, we do feel that we could eat, and once or twice Mary and I have placed ourselves near the kitchen-door that we might have a chance of being offered a spoonful of the stews which some of the gentlemen were cooking within: no one has enough to spare; but for some days past, Mr. R—— has generously given us a present of six potatoes each day, and though this is divided amongst nine of us, yet still it is a great treat. Dear mamma has now little nourishment indeed for the poor baby; sometimes nurse gives it a little bit of salt meat to suck, sometimes a

a few drops of brandy-and-water, and we are obliged to keep constantly a fig in its mouth. It cries very seldom now, but we fear it is too weak to cry, and we cannot help sometimes dreading that it may be the will of Heaven to take our little Maitland from us ; but we may surely trust the worst is now over, for we are off Falmouth, and hope is whispering that all may yet be well."

" Thursday, April 12.

" They tell us we shall be off Plymouth to-day by two o'clock. Is it possible? We must now prepare to quit the ship. To quit the ship—how delightful ! Twelve days we have been on board—twelve such days—but all is forgotten now but gratitude to Heaven."

" Plymouth, Pope's Head, 12th of April,
Thursday night, nine o'clock.

" This has been a day of joy and thankfulness. Oh, the unspeakable delight of seeing dear, dear England again ! I had not long finished writing this morning, when we were called on deck to see Mount Edgecomb. How beautiful did its hanging woods and

lovely rocks appear ! Did ever grass look so green, or trees bud in more refreshing beauty, and did ever more delighted eyes gaze upon so sweet a scene ? We soon hailed a pilot-boat, and took leave of our shipmates ; Mr. R—— accompanied us on shore. As we got into the boat it began to rain heavily, but we called it a summer shower. We were quite wet before we got to the quay, yet never did a happier party trudge up to the Pope's Head Inn than we were, with our writing-desks, and little bags and bundles in our arms. Even the Custom-house officers received us kindly, and our trunks were very slightly inspected.

“ Mr. R—— dined with us ; how we did enjoy the fried soles, veal cutlets, tarts, and Devonshire cream ! We ate so heartily, and praised everything so extravagantly, that the landlord and waiters were quite amused. Papa was obliged to make an apology for us, by explaining that we had not dined for twelve days. The tender-hearted landlord was horror-struck—he flew out of the room, and returned with a most delicate-looking roast pig, which he placed before us.

We were not so lost to all propriety as to eat roast pig after Devonshire cream, but we were eloquent in our thanks. Sweet little pig! with what transport would you have been greeted, had you but made your appearance the day before. We must now prepare for the comfort and delight of a good bed. We shall never know how to sleep, it will be something so new and strange."


" Exeter, Saturday evening, April 14.

" This morning, at eight o'clock, we left Plymouth. Papa took the whole mail for ourselves, but the day was so lovely, the country so enchanting, and our spirits so light, we could not rest inside. Mary and I insisted on getting out with papa into the seat behind, and never did we feel so elated in our own carriage, as we did on this day's journey. We should have been proud to have bowed to the highest of our acquaintances. We saw no one we had ever seen before, but the banks were covered with primroses and violets, and every flower seemed a friend—even the flowers in France, we thought, had not quite an innocent look,

and all the beauty we saw there is not to be compared to this single county of Devonshire. The beautiful variety of ground, the wooded heights, and luxuriant plains; the smiling cottages, and the healthy, happy people—all, all was ecstasy to us as we passed along. Then the first English soldiers we met—how brave they looked! their's are the hearts, true to their king and their country, and their courage is inspired by the justice of the cause for which they fight,—we looked on them with pride and confidence: of late we had only seen all we most dreaded in a scarlet-coat. But how much was the happiness of this happy day heightened by the prospect of soon seeing again all most dear to us—for what can be more delightful than the sun shining brightly on trees and flowers, and the remembrance of absent objects of affection, with the hope of speedily being present with them again. If any wish to enjoy perfect happiness, let them travel through France as we have done; and let them return, amidst friends and flowers, to their own dear peaceful and happy home!"

CHAPTER XXV.

ON the arrival of the travellers in London, they were received with the greatest joy by Mrs. Douglas: no intelligence of them had reached her since the landing of Bonaparte, and her anxiety had been very great. Mrs. Douglas had of late years become a much improved character; the world and its empty joys had lost much of their former influence over her; frequent association and constant correspondence with her sister had gradually led her mind to higher pursuits. In affection to her nieces she never had been deficient, and she now listened to their animated details of all they had enjoyed, and all they had suffered, with feelings of the deepest interest. Mr. Maitland was treated by her as formerly,



with the most attentive kindness; but he, fearful of giving trouble, was anxious to have removed to an hotel, his medical attendants having pronounced his eyes to be in a state for an immediate operation; but to this removal she would not listen for a moment, and the most commodious and airy apartment in the house was immediately appropriated to his use.

It was now the evening before the appointed day, and Mr. Maitland was distressed to feel with what deep and trembling anxiety both the girls awaited the event of the morrow. He talked to them a great deal during the evening of his own feelings on the subject, with a view of inspiring them with that dependence on, and resignation to, the will of God, which he himself so strongly felt.

“ I have no fears, dear girls,” he said, “ as to the issue of this experiment; I may almost say I have no wishes. I leave it all with Him who has been to me a God of infinite love. I do not say I shall not rejoice in the blessing of restored sight; it will be His gift, and will be received by me with the deepest feelings of grateful praise. It will be sweet to me to see again the glories of the summer sky, to

look upon the green earth and the budding flowers, and, far sweeter still, to gaze upon those who have twined themselves around every feeling of my inmost heart, to trace in your dear faces the expression of that affection which has made life again to me so sweet a blessing. But I do not allow myself to dwell on such hopes, and should they not be realised, you must remember they are withheld by Him who cannot err—to you, yet new to life, and eager in bright and youthful hope, there is something appalling in the idea of one long dark night; but there is no darkness to Him on whom the glorious light of the gospel has fully dawned. I have been drawn by the cords of love, to look more and more to the rock of my salvation; and it is since this last deprivation has come upon me that I have experienced some of my happiest moments—that I have more entirely leant on God alone, and in this feeling all of perfect happiness is comprised, for

‘ Oh thou bounteous Giver of all good,
Thou art of all thy gifts thyself the crown.
Give what thou can’st, without thee we are poor,
And with thee rich, take what thou wilt away.’

“ But let us,” he added, in a cheerful tone, “ join the rest of the party, and let me see my dear girls exert themselves for the rest of the evening.”

Mary and Florence rose next morning calmed and refreshed by fervent prayer. The operation was to take place at eleven, and at their own earnest desire, as well as at Mr. Maitland's, they were to be permitted to be present.

“ If I am to recover my sight for a moment,” said Mr. Maitland, “ let that moment be spent in gazing on the living images of those on whom imagination has so fondly dwelt.”

As it drew near the appointed time, Florence sat with Mary in the drawing-room, with her eyes fixed on the clock on the mantel-piece; alternate hope and fear agitated her whole frame.

“ Is this the peace, the trust, which but one short hour ago I seemed to feel,” she murmured to herself; “ oh that I could remember that he is in the care of Him who never withholds his gifts but in love and mercy.”

Time ran on, the hand was just touching the appointed hour, and scarce had it ceased to strike, when a loud knock at the hall-door first flushed her cheek to crimson, then blanched it to the paleness of death. Mary flew to her sister.

“ Florence, dear Florence; this is too much for you—you must not attempt to be present; indeed, indeed, it will not do.”

“ Am I then so weak,” she exclaimed; “ have I on bended knees, and with uplifted hands, prayed that His will should be done in mere mockery of spirit?”

The colour returned to her cheek, she ceased to tremble; and on the oculist being announced, she followed her father and sister to Mr. Maitland’s room, with a firmness and composure which astonished Mr. Percy.

“ Now, young ladies, whispered Mr. T——, I depend upon perfect calmness. Sit down in this chair, dear Sir,” he said, addressing his patient. “ Mr. Percy, we require your assistance.” He placed Mr. Maitland’s hands in those of Mr. Percy.

Florence gave one hasty look, then shutting her eyes, she breathed with difficulty. She

heard the oculist lift his instrument from the table—there was silence for a few minutes—then a low suppressed sigh from Mr. Maitland.

“It is *over*,” exclaimed the oculist; “and, thank God! seems perfectly to have succeeded. Now, dear Sir, I must keep my promise with you; you may look at your young friends for one single moment.”

Mr. Maitland lifted on them his seeing eyes. Oh that look!—could they even in their dying hour forget it?

“Now, young ladies, leave the room, I entreat you,” exclaimed Mr. T——. “No more, no more, dear Sir, the bandages must instantly be put on. From this hour the greatest quietness must be observed—everything will now depend on the fever being kept down, and all excitement being avoided.”

The girls arose to obey, with trembling steps, and the next moment were weeping in their mother’s arms; then sinking on their knees, they joined with her in pouring out the feelings of their grateful hearts in earnest prayer.

No one was now admitted into the cham-

ber of the invalid, but Mr. Percy and the sick nurse ; the accounts, however, were as favourable as possible. A few days had passed away, and Florence's anxiety for one single look became intense. It was towards the fifth evening, that the sick nurse, having assured her that Mr. Maitland was asleep upon the sofa and not easily disturbed, she gently advanced on tiptoe into the room. He appeared the image of a calm and peaceful mind—one hand supporting his head, the other hanging over the side of the couch on which he lay. Anxiously would Florence have wished to have pressed that dear hand to her lips, but was withheld by the fear of awakening him. The rays of the setting sun falling on his face had tinged his usually pale cheek with a faint glow ; a heavenly smile hung upon his lips ; he uttered a few words. Florence bent her head to listen : it was the voice of praise.

“Asleep, awake,” she murmured, “he is ever with his God. Oh that I may profit by his bright example !” And, raising her eyes to heaven, she silently poured out the emotions of her swelling heart to that unseen

Power who had graciously listened to the voice of her supplication ; then earnestly bending over him for a few moments, she softly exclaimed, "How sweetly he sleeps ! how calm is the repose of the righteous ! I could gaze upon him for ever, but it must not be."

She turned to leave the room, when Mr. Maitland, suddenly awakening, exclaimed— "It is Florence ! it is my own Florence's light footsteps ! Come here, dear girl."

In a moment she was kneeling by his side.

"Oh forgive me, dear Mr. Maitland !" she said, in much emotion. "I have done wrong, quite wrong. Oh do not let me agitate you !"

"Compose yourself, dear Florence ; you do not agitate me ; it soothes and delights me to hear your voice again. How often has your image, and that of your dear sister's, visited me in my dreams, and now a few days more, and if it is the will of God to perfect his work of mercy, I shall look around upon you all in joy and thankfulness. O can I ever sufficiently thank him for what he has done for me ? 'Let my prayer to God be

set forth as incense, and let the lifting up of my hands be an evening sacrifice.' ”

Florence could with difficulty tear herself away, but she felt it must be done, nor could she fully enjoy the delight of having seen her dear Mr. Maitland again till she had confessed to her mother what she had allowed herself to do.

Mrs. Percy gently warned her against a similar imprudence, but it was not many days before both Mary and she were permitted to spend some hours of every evening in conversing and reading to the invalid. At the end of a fortnight, the bandages were removed for several hours of every day, and in three weeks his restoration to sight was complete. With what feelings of holy joy did he raise his eyes to the glorious orb of day, rising majestically in the boundless sky, or trace the countless multitude of stars shining in the azure vault of heaven ! Could he ever gaze with indifference on this fair world ? Would the hour ever arrive when he would cease to be grateful for the restoration of that blessing, which enabled him once more, in all

the varied beauties of creation, to behold his God?

The first day of his again joining the family was one of deep thankfulness and joy; even little Charles partook of the general happiness, and climbing up on Mr. Maitland's knee, he looked into his eyes with delighted astonishment.

"I grateful to God for giving Mr. Maitland *open eyes*," he exclaimed; "he see now like papa, and mamma, and everybody in the world. *Ah, quel bonheur, que je suis charmé!*"

It was in the evening of this happy day, that Mr. Maitland entered with Mr. Percy on a subject which agitated him considerably.

"Before submitting to this operation," he said, "I thought it right to settle all my worldly affairs. You are not, perhaps, aware that in losing an only brother some years ago I was left without any near relations. My fortune is an ample one, and need I say that to your dear children, dear to me as my own, I have bequeathed it? Now, do not interrupt me, dear sir, I have not yet done; I have on my part to ask a favour of you which no fortune could purchase: it is that I may hence-

forth be considered as a member of your happy family, and add my humble endeavours to your's in directing the education of your dear boys."

Mr. Percy could only clasp his hand in acquiescence, and they parted in silent emotion.

If little Charles was charmed and happy, what were the sensations of Mary and Florence? The morning was fixed for their return to the Priory, and their cup of bliss was full.

"One day, one little day!" Florence exclaimed, as she bounded lightly into the carriage—"one little day, and we shall see again old Thomas and the gipsy, and our own dear happy home."

THE END.

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